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THE DISEASE AND THE CURE

ALSO KNOWN AS:

THE SUFFICIENT ANSWER FOR THE ONE WHO ASKED ABOUT THE REMEDIAL CURE

IMĀM IBN AL-QAYYIM (D. 751H)

The Disease and The Cure

By

Imām Abū Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Abū
Bakr Ibn Ayyub Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah
(691 – 751H)

Also known as
Al-Jawāb al-Kāfī Liman S'al 'An al-Dawā al-Shāfī
The Sufficient Answer for the One Who Asked
About the Remedial Cure

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Transliteration Table

Consonants

ء	ʾ	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	ʿ	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

Vowels

Short	ـَــ	a	ـِــ	i	ـُــ	u
Long	ـَــا	ā	ـِــي	ī	ـُــو	ū
Diphthongs	ـَــوْ	aw	ـَــيْ	ay		

عَزَّوَجَلَّ	The Mighty and Majestic.
سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ	The Sublime and Exalted.
صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ	May Allāh make good mention of His Prophet in the highest company and grant him safety in this life and the next.
رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ	May Allāh be pleased with him.
رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ	May Allāh show mercy to him.
عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ	Peace be upon him

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Foreword

This book is a translation of the following book which is known via two names: *al-Jawāb al-Kāfī Liman S'al 'An al-Dawā' al-Shāfī* and *Al-Da' Wa al-Dawā'*. It has been recognized as one of the most impactful books in disciplining the soul, deterring from sin and encouraging sincere repentance.

The author, al-Imām Ibn al-Qayyim, is considered by the scholars of Islām to be a well-versed scholar and sincere advisor who refers to the Perfect Book of Allāh and the Sunnah whilst simultaneously purifying his authorships of any dependency on Greek philosophy and notions that contradict the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

This book was a response to a question posed by an individual who was afflicted by a calamity, finding himself in a dire and needy state. He acknowledged to himself that if he failed to rid himself of this ailment it would destroy him in this life and the next. He had endeavoured to relieve himself of this affliction, but its severity and intensity grew. Consequently, Ibn al-Qayyim diagnosed his condition and understood the request within the question, providing an answer that was detailed and appropriate. Within his answer contained preventative measures, consequences of obedience to Allāh, the harms of sins and an adequate means of ridding oneself from such suffering.

The Print Used for the Translation

This translation has been taken from the Arabic version which has been printed and is based on four manuscripts dating back to the 8th century Hijri. One of them was transcribed 19 years after Ibn al-Qayyim's death.

Also, further reference was made to two other manuscripts which date back to the 12th century Hijri.

Ascribing the Book to al-Imām Ibn al-Qayyim

Scholars who have studied the life and works of al-Imām Ibn al-Qayyim have established this book as one of his many compositions. The first to do so was his own student and a scholar in his own right, Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī.

The evidence of this ascription is within this book itself, as the author alludes to numerous passages from his other works, clearly portraying and reinforcing his methodology therein. This is clear to see for the reader as they will come across his reference to '*Ayman al-Qur'ān*', which is also known and printed as '*At-Tibyān fi Aqsām al-Qur'ān*'. Also, he alluded to his other work, '*Ijtimāʿ' al-Juyūsh al-Islāmīyah*' and '*As-Ṣawāʿiq al-Mursalah*' in various segments throughout the book. Lastly, he refers to his own teacher, Ibn Taymīyah, by quoting his stances and opinions in various issues in multiple passages.

Title of the Book

It has never been documented that the author himself titled the book. Instead, he proceeded to answer the question without ever attributing a title to his response. Nevertheless, it has been noted that his student, Ibn Rajab, was the first to title the book. He named it '*Al-Dā' Wa al-Dawā*' (The Illness and The Cure). This book is also known by many as '*al-Jawāb al-Kāfī Liman S'al 'An al-Dawā' al-Shāfī*' (The Sufficient Answer for the One Who Asked About the Remedial Cure) which was attributed to the book at a later time. Due to this, many scholars have accepted and confirmed that the more suitable and authentic title is '*Al-Dā' Wa al-Dawā*' (The Illness and The Cure).

The Topic

As aforementioned, this book was written as a response to a question. The question was as follows:

What do the distinguished scholars, the vanguards of the religion – may Allāh be pleased with them all – say regarding a man who has been trailed with a calamity and knows that if it continues it shall ruin his worldly affairs as well as his afterlife? This is despite the fact that he has endeavoured to repel it from himself with every means though it only increases in intensity and severity. What is the method in repelling it? How can it be resolved?

May Allāh have mercy on the one who aids the afflicted one. "Allāh Aids His servant as long as he aids his brother.[1]" Provide us with a verdict. May Allāh have mercy on you, and may He be pleased with you.

Irrespective of the detail behind the question, the questioner withheld from mentioning the exact affliction that had overtaken them. The author follows suit and, likewise, withholds from explicitly mentioning the calamity which afflicted the questioner. Nevertheless, he wrote numerous chapters pertaining to sincere supplication; its effects on an individual; sins and their types and their detrimental consequences whilst paying attention to major sins – polytheism being the most severe; murder; and the negative impact of fornication and lewd acts throughout society.

Further, he alluded to the above being the possible reason behind the question. Thereafter, he proceeded to immediately answer the question directly from the Sunnah by firstly mentioning the authentic *hadīth* that has been authenticated in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[1] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who narrated from the Prophet who said:

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[1] Collected by Muslim. Book of Remembrance and Supplication [2699].

> *"Allāh did not decree the descent of any illness, except that He revealed a remedy for it."*

From the onset, the author presents an answer and a remedy deeply rooted in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah that medical doctors would struggle to administer. It is undoubtedly a remedy for the heart and soul before the body.

The detail and length in the answer is a method used by his own teacher – Ibn Taymīyah – as mentioned by Imam Ibn al-Qayyim in *Madārij as-Sālikīn* who quoted his shaykh as saying: *"If a questioner puts forth a question, it is considered a higher quality of knowledge to provide a sufficient answer, and your answer should not be restricted to what merely solves the necessary issue at hand."*

The Author

He is al-Imām Shams al-Dīn Abū Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Abū Bakr bin Ayyub Ibn Sa'd bin Harīz Az-Zar'ee Al-Dimashqī, famously known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah (691 – 751H).

Ibn al-Qayyim was born on the seventh of the month of Safar in the Hijri year 691. He was nurtured in a household known for righteousness and Islamic scholarship in a town approximately fifty-five miles south east of Damascus. Ibn al-Qayyim excelled in many sciences of Islamic knowledge such as Qur'ān exegesis, jurisprudence, Hadīth studies and much more under the tutelage of well-renowned scholars. The most prominent of them being Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah whom he maintained a close relationship with until he passed away in the year

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[1] Book of Medicine [5678].

728H. He benefitted a tremendous amount of knowledge from his teacher and conveyed the knowledge he learnt on through the generation. It could be said that the most distinguishing benefit that he learnt from his teacher(s) was adhering to the principles and foundations clearly revealed in the Qur'ān and Sunnah upon the understanding of the Salaf (Pious Predecessors) whilst rejecting any opposition to the divine revelation. This gave way to a much-needed revival of many aspects of knowledge that were caused to diminish by those who held onto false opinions and creed.

Some of Ibn al-Qayyim's Students

1. Imam Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, a well-renowned scholar and jurist. He passed away in the year 795H.
2. The major scholar and Imām of Tafsīr Imadu-deen Ismā'īl bin Umar bin Kathīr who lived in Damascus and sought knowledge from its major scholars. He possessed in-depth knowledge of Qur'ān and Hadīth. He is the author of many books including 'Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr' (The Exegesis of the Qur'ān) and 'Al-Bidāyah Wa al-Nihāyah'. He passed away in the year 774H.
3. Al-Imām Shams al-Dīn Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Abdul-Hādī bin al-Ḥumaid bin Abdul-Hādī bin Yusuf bin Muhammad bin Qudāmah al-Maqdisī, a scholar well-versed in many fields of Islamic knowledge. Al-Imām Ad-Dhahabī mentions in his regard: "By Allāh, I have never met him except that I have gained some benefit from him." He passed away in the year 744H.

Some Testimonies of Scholars for Ibn al-Qayyim

Ibn Rajab: "A scholar in tafsir, the principles of the religion, meticulous in deriving verdicts, a scholar in jurisprudence and its principles and the Arabic language. He was a man who would strive in worship, lengthening his prayers, constant in remembrance of Allāh, submissive before his Lord. I never witnessed anyone like him or anyone more knowledgeable or anyone more well versed in the meanings of the text of the Qur'ān and Sunnah or the reality of true faith. He is not infallible, but I haven't seen anyone like him."

Ad-Dhahabi: "He placed particular focus on Hadīth and its science, he would busy himself with fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and was excellent in it."

Ibn Kathīr: "He excelled in many sciences, especially exegesis of the Qur'ān."

Al-Shawkānī: "He would restrict himself to the authentic evidences, he would implement them whilst shunning any opinions that conflict with the evidence. He would propagate the truth in an uncompromising manner."

His Death

Ibn al-Qayyim passed away on the twenty-third of the month of Rajab in the year 751H. The funeral prayer was performed over his body the next day in the grand mosque of Damascus. May Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him and admit him into the highest level of Paradise.

Translated for a Western Audience

It must be noted that the translation at hand aims to convey the meaning of the Arabic text from the original words of the author as accurately as possible. It has also been presented in a manner to suit an English-speaking audience. Therefore, we have relied on the meaning of the text rather than a literal translation in particular parts of the book. In addition, on the very rare occasion where segments have been omitted, this was a carefully thought through decision taken by the translation and editing team in light of particular circumstances.

In the Name of Allāh, Al-Raḥmān, Al-Raḥīm

There Is No Ability to Change, or Strength Without Allāh, The Most High, The Most Mighty.

What do the distinguished scholars, the vanguards of the religion –Allāh be pleased with them all– say regarding a man who has been trialed with a calamity and knows that if it continues, it shall ruin his worldly affairs as well as his afterlife. Despite the fact he has endeavored to repel it from himself with every means, yet it only increases in intensity and strength; what is the method in in repelling it? And how can it be solved?

May Allāh have mercy on the one who aids someone who has been befallen with a calamity, "Allāh is in aid of His servant for as long as he is in aid of his brother."[1] Provide us with a verdict, may you be rewarded.

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[1] Collected by Muslim. Book of Remembrance and Supplication [2699].

For Every Illness, There Is a Cure

The Shaykh and Imām, Shaykh al-Islām and grand Muftī, Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abdullah Muhammad bin Abū Bakr bin Ayyub, he is the leader of the Jawzī school in the city of Damascus –Allāh be pleased with him-began to answer the question as follows:

Absolute praise rightfully belongs to Allāh alone. It has been authenticated in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī[1] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who narrated from the Prophet who said, "Allāh did not decree the descent of any illness, except that He revealed a remedy for it."

And in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim,[2] on the authority of Jabir bin Abdullah who said: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "For every illness there is a remedy, if the remedy matches the illness, he shall be cured by the permission of Allāh."

In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad,[3] on the authority of Usāmah bin Shurayk who narrated that the Prophet said: "Indeed, Allāh never decreed an illness, except that He also decreed its cure. Those who know it, know so, and those who are ignorant of it, are ignorant of it."

In another wording[4] it states: "Allāh has not placed any illness without its cure or remedy, except one illness." They asked: "O' Messenger of

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[1] Book of Medicine [5678].

[2] Book of Salutations and greetings [2204]

[3] 4/278 [18456]

[4] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2038]. Abū Dāwūd [2015]. Ibn Mājah [3436]. Aḥmad

Allāh ﷺ, what is it?" He replied, "Old age." At-Tirmidhī graded this narration as authentic. This is comprehensive of the illnesses of the heart, soul and body along with their remedies.

[18454]. At-Ṭabarānī [1/179-184].

Ignorance Is an Illness, and Its Remedy Is to Ask

The Prophet declared that ignorance is an illness, whilst its remedy is to ask the scholars. Abū Dawud[1] has cited in his *Sunan,* on the authority of Jabir bin Abdullah who said: "We went on a journey with the Prophet when a man was struck by a stone that left a gash on his head. Later, he was overcome by nocturnal emission, so he enquired with his companions by saying, 'Do you deem that I have a concession to perform *tayammum?'* They replied: 'We do not deem that you have this concession whilst you are able to use water.' Thus, he bathed in water and consequently died. When we approached the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, he was informed of this incident and said, "They have killed him, Allāh kill them! If only they had asked if they did not know! Surely the cure for ignorance is to ask. It would have sufficed him to perform *tayammum* and press a bandage over his gash and wipe the water over it and wash the remainder of his body."

Here he informed that ignorance is an illness, and its cure is to ask.

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[1] Book of purification [336]

The Entire Qur'ān Is a Remedy

Allāh has mentioned that the Qur'ān is a remedy, He said:

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَٰهُ قُرْءَانًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَّقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ ءَايَٰتُهُۥٓ ۖ ءَا۬عْجَمِىٌّ وَعَرَبِىٌّ ۗ قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
هُدًى وَشِفَآءٌ ۚ ﴿٤٤﴾

"And if We had made it a non-Arabic Qur'ān, they would have said, 'Why are its verses unexplained in detail? Is it foreign yet the Messenger is Arab?' Say: 'It is for those who believe, a guidance and a cure." [Fussilat:44]

He also said:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَآءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۙ وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٨٢﴾

"And We reveal from the Qur'ān what is a cure and a mercy for the believers." [al-Isra':82]

The letter *'min' (from)* in this verse defines the type and does not indicate a reference to a part of whatever is being mentioned, as the entire Qur'ān is a remedy, as elaborated in the first of the two verses above. So it is a cure for the hearts from the illness of ignorance, doubt and misgivings. Thus, Allāh did not reveal a cure from the heavens that is more comprehensive, beneficial or more powerful or inclusive in eradicating an illness than the Qur'ān.

Treatment in the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ān (al-Fātiḥah)

It has been authentically reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim,[1] on the authority of Abū Sa'īd who said: Some of the Companions of the Prophet went on a journey till they reached some of the 'Arab tribes (at night). They asked the latter to treat them as their guests, but they refused. The chief of that tribe was then bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and they tried their best to cure him but in vain. Some of them said, "Nothing has benefited him, will you go to the visitors who resided here at night, it may be that some of them possess something (as treatment)." They went to the group of the Companions and said, "Our chief has been bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and we have tried everything, but it has not benefited. Have you got anything (useful)?" One of them replied, "Yes, by Allāh! I can recite a *Ruqyah*, but as you have refused to accept us as your guests, I will not recite the *Ruqyah* for you unless you fix for us some wages for it." They agreed to pay them a flock of sheep. One of them then went and recited the opening chapter (Suratul-Fātiḥah): 'All the praises are for the Lord of the Worlds' and puffed over the chief who became sound as a result, as if he was released from shackles and got up and started walking, showing no signs of sickness. They paid them what they agreed to pay. Some of the Companions then suggested dividing their earnings among themselves, but the one who performed the recitation said, "Do not divide them till we go to the Prophet and narrate the whole story to him and wait for his order." So, they went to Allāh's Messenger and narrated the story. Allāh's Messenger asked, "How did you come to know that Suratul- Fātiḥah was recited as Ruqyah?" Then he added, "You have done the right thing. Divide what you have earned and assign a share for me as well." As it is evident, this remedy had an effect on this illness and eradicated it as if it never existed. It is the easiest remedy and the least exhausting. If a servant refines the treatment through the opening chapter, he will find it having an amazing effect as a remedy.

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[1] Bukhārī: Book of Hiring, chapter: What can be given for Ruqyah [2276]. Muslim: Book of salutations and greetings, chapter: The permissibility of receiving a wage for Ruqyah using the Qur'ān and supplications.

I spent some time in the city of Makkah whilst frequently experiencing illness that I could not find a doctor for nor a remedy, so I would treat myself with the opening chapter of the Qur'ān, and I would find that it had an amazing effect. So I would prescribe this to those who complain of an ailment and many of them would be swiftly cured[1].

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[1] The author also mentions such accounts on his authorships of Zād al Ma'ād and Madārij as-Sālikīn.

The Reasons for a Delay or an Absence in the Cure

Here, there is a point that all must be conscious of, and it is that the phrases of remembrance, the verses and the supplications are used in the pursuit of a cure, or those used in *ruqya* are inherently beneficial and remedial. However, they require acceptance from the place they are applied on and a discerning strength from the one who is applying them. So whenever the cure is delayed, it is either from a weakness in effect that the applicant has, or a lack of acceptance from the patient, or from a further strong preventative that blocks the remedy from having its effect, as is the case with the more tangible medicines. Or it could be due to another preventative. If one's natural form wholly accepts the remedy, the body shall benefit from it in accordance to the extent of this acceptance. Likewise, if the heart wholly accepts the *Ruqyah* and supplications of refuge (in Allāh) whilst the one performing the procedure does so with full enthusiasm and discerning care, it shall have an effect in eradicating the illness.

The Reasons for a Delay or an Absence in the Effect of a Supplication

The same as the aforementioned applies to a supplication. Bearing in mind, it is from the strongest means in repelling harm and attaining the desired objective. However, its effect can be delayed, either due to a weakness in the supplicant in that it is a supplication that is undesirable to Allāh due to its offensive content, or a weakness in the heart and a lack of devotion to Allāh as well as a scarcity of presence of heart at the time of supplication. Thus, becoming like a flimsy bow that the arrow departs from in a feeble manner. This failure to achieve a response to the supplication occurs due to a possible prevention being present, such as the consumption of unlawful products, oppression, the dark cover of sins over the heart, an overwhelming state of heedlessness, obliviousness or idleness and its suppression.

As it has been collected in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Hakim,[1] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who narrates from the Prophet: "Invoke Allāh, whilst you are sure of a response, and know that Allāh does not accept a supplication from a heedless and distracted heart." Also, the consumption of anything unlawful thwarts its strength and weakens it, as has been reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim,[2] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: 'The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'Allāh the Almighty is Good and accepts only that which is good. And verily Allāh has commanded the believers to do that which He has commanded the Messengers. So the Almighty has said:

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[1] Collected in al-Mustadrak 1/670-671 [1817] and At-Tirmidhī [3479].

[2] Book of Zakat, Chapter: The Acceptance of Charity From Lawful Means and Developing It [1015].

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرُّسُلُ كُلُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَٱعْمَلُوا۟ صَٰلِحًا ﴿٥١﴾

O you Messengers! Eat of the Ṭayibāt [all kinds of halal (legal) foods] and perform righteous deeds." [al-Mu'minūn:51]

And the Almighty has said:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُلُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ ﴿١٧٢﴾

"O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you." [al-Baqarah:172].'

Then the Prophet mentioned the case of a man after having journeyed far, disheveled and dusty as a result of travel, who spreads out his hands to the sky saying 'O Lord! O Lord!' while his food is haram (unlawful), his drink is haram (unlawful), his clothing is haram (unlawful), and he has been nourished with haram (unlawful), so how can his supplication be answered!" Abdullah, the son of Imām Aḥmad, mentioned in the book of Zuhd[1] (abstinence of the worldly life) by his father: "The children of Isrā'īl were struck by a calamity, so they came out in search for the relief, so Allāh revealed to the Prophet that he should inform them: 'You come out into the open plain with impure bodies, you raise palms to me that you have used to spill blood and used to fill your homes with unlawful things, and now that My Anger towards you has intensified, you shall not increase in anything from Me except distance.'"

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[1] [788]. Also collected by Abū Dāwūd in Az-Zuhd [13].

Abū Thar said: "The amount of righteousness with a supplication is sufficient as much as salt suffices in food[1]."

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[1] Collected by Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [788]. Also by Ibnul Mubarak in Az-Zuhd [319].

Supplication Is from the Most Beneficial Remedies

Supplication is one of the most beneficial remedies, it is the enemy of affliction, it fends it off and treats it, obstructs its befalling and uplifts it if it descends. It is the weapon of the believer, as al-Hakim[1] has collected in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Ali bin Abi Ṭālib who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Supplication is the weapon of the believer and the pillar of the religion and the light of the heavens and the earth.'"

There are three possible scenarios pertaining to supplication:

One: It is stronger than the calamity, thus, it repels it.

Two: It is weaker than the calamity, and so the calamity overpowers it and the servant is afflicted. However, the supplication can lessen the effect of the calamity, even slightly.

Three: They combat each other, each cancelling out the other.

al-Hakim[2] reports in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Aisha who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to me: 'Caution cannot evade the decree from occurring and supplication benefits in that which has descended and that which has not. Indeed, the calamity may befall and is met by a supplication causing them to both struggle against one another until the day of resurrection.'"

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[1] 1/669 [1812].

[2] 1/669 [1813].

Al-Hakim[1] also reported on the authority of Ibn Umar who narrated that the Prophet said: "Supplication benefits in that which has descended and that which has not, thus it is imperative upon you, O' servants of Allāh, to supplicate."

Also, on the authority of Thawbān[2]: "Decree is not repelled by anything other than supplication, none other than righteousness can increase lifespan, and certainly a man can be denied some provisions due to a sin he perpetrates."

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[1] 1/670 [1815].

[2] 1/670 [1814]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4022]. Imām Aḥmad 37/68 [22386]. Ibn Ḥibbān [872].

Persistence in Supplication

Amongst the most useful remedies is persistence in supplication. Ibn Mājah[1] has collected a narration in his *Sunan* on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Whoever does not ask Allāh, He [Allāh] becomes angry at him'". Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Hakim[2] on the authority of Anas who narrated from the Prophet said: "Do not fail to supplicate, as it is certain that none shall be doomed with supplication."

Al-Awza'i also narrates from Az-Zuhrī who narrates on the authority of Aisha who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Indeed, Allāh loves those who are persistent in supplication.'"

In the book of Zuhd (worldly abstinence) by Imām Aḥmad[3], on the authority of Qatada who said: "Muwaraq said: 'I have been unable to find a similitude of the believer other than a man who is adrift at sea on a piece of wood, as he calls out 'My Lord, My Lord!' In the hope that Allāh saves him.'"

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[1] [3827]. Also collected by At-Tirmidhī [3373]. Imām Aḥmad 2/442 [9701] and others.

[2] 1/671 [1818].

[3] [1765].

Obstacles That Stand in the Way of a Response

From the obstacles that prevent the effect of a supplication taking place is the hastiness of the supplicant and his view that the response is long overdue. Thus, he despairs and quits any further supplication. He is equivalent to the one who sows a seed or plants some vegetation before taking care of it and watering it; however, when he deems the complete fruition and fullness to be overdue, he discards it and disregards it!

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[1] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who narrated that the Prophet said: "You shall be responded to as long as you are not hasty, to say: 'I supplicated, but I am yet to be answered.'"

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim[2] also on the authority of Abū Hurairah: "The supplication of a slave continues to be granted as long as he does not supplicate for a sinful thing, or for something that would cut off the ties of kinship and does not grow impatient." It was said: "O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ! What does growing impatient mean?" He said, "It is one's saying: 'I supplicated again and again but I do not think that my prayer will be answered.' Then he becomes frustrated and gives up supplication altogether."

In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad[3] on the authority of Anas who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'The servant will not cease to be upon good as long as he is not impetuous.' They asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, what does it mean to be impetuous?' He responded: 'To say: 'I have supplicated to my Lord, yet he has not responded to me.'"

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[1] Book of Supplications, Chapter: You Shall Be Responded to as Long as You Are Not Hasty [6340].

[2] Book of Remembrance and Supplication, Chapter: The Supplication of a Slave Continues to Be Granted as Long as He Is Not Impatient [2735].

[3] 3/193 [13008, 13198].

The Conditions for the Acceptance of a Supplication

If the supplication is combined with a complete presence and consciousness of heart for the objective and meets with the six prescribed times of a response - and they are: The last third of the night, at the time of the call to prayer, between the call to prayer and the second call to perform the prayer, immediately upon completion of the five obligatory prayers, from the moment the *Imām* ascends to deliver the sermon on Friday till the establishment of the prayer and the final hour on Friday after the afternoon prayer. Now, if this is matched with the awe in the heart and a dire sense of need before your Lord, a sense of insignificance, an earnest plead to Him and a weakness in being without His aid whilst facing the direction of prayer, being in a state of purity, raising the hands upwards towards Allāh The Most High, beginning the supplication with praises and glorification of Allāh before coupling this with sending the blessings and salutations upon Muhammad ﷺ the Messenger and His servant, then offering repentance, seeking forgiveness before addressing Allāh and being persistent in the request, adulating Him whilst invoking Him in hope and fear, interceding with His Oneness and Perfect Names and Attributes and offering an act of charity- if this is all performed, it would be a supplication that would seldom be rejected, especially if it corresponds with the supplications that the Prophet has informed us of that are most likely answered and those that contain The Great Name of Allāh.

Supplications That Are Most Likely Answered

From this is the narration that has been collected by the four compilers of the *Sunan* and by Ibn Ḥibbān on the authority of Abdullah bin Buraydah who narrated from his father who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ heard a man say: 'O Allāh! I ask you by virtue that I testify that you are Allāh; there is no deity worthy of worship except You, The One, The Self-Sufficient Master, Who did not beget, and was not begotten, and to whom no one is equal.' Allāh's Messenger then said, 'He has asked Allāh by His Name by which when asked, He gives, and by which when supplicated, He answers[1].'" In another wording, it states: "You have asked Allāh by His greatest Name[2]."

Also in the four *Sunan* and Ibn Ḥibbān is a narration on the authority of Anas bin Malik wherein he was seated with the Messenger of Allāhﷺ whilst a man was praying, the man supplicated by saying: "O Allāh! I ask You by virtue of the fact that all praise is due to You; none has the right to be worshiped but You alone, and You have no partner nor associate, the Bestower, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, the Possessor of Majesty and Honor." The Prophet then said: "He has asked Allāh by His Greatest Name which, if He is asked thereby He gives and if He is called upon thereby He answers."[3]

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[1] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [1493, 1494]. At-Tirmidhī [3475]. Ibn Mājah [3857]. Imām Aḥmad 5/350 [22952, 22965] and Ibn Ḥibbān [892].

[2] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [1494].

[3] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [1495]. An-Nasā'ī [1400]. Ibn Mājah [3858]. At-Tirmidhī [3544]. Ibn Ḥibbān [893]. Imām Aḥmad 3/120, 158, 265 [12205, 12611, 13798].

Also, At-Tirmidhī[1] collected a narration on the authority of Asma' bint Zayd that the Prophet said: "Allāh's greatest name is in these two verses:

وَإِلَٰهُكُمۡ إِلَٰهٞ وَٰحِدٞۖ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

'And your deity is One deity, there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He, Ar-Raḥmān, Ar-Raḥīm.' [al-Baqarah:163]

And the Opening of al-'Imrān: 'Alif. Lām. Mīm. Allāh, None has the right to be worshipped but He, the [al-Hay] Perfect living, the Sustainer [al-Qayyum]} [al-'Imrān:1-2].'"

At-Tirmidhī graded this narration as authentic.

In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad[2] and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Hakim on the authority of Abū Hurairah, Anas bin Malik and Rabi'a bin 'Amir who narrated from the Prophet who said: "Recite frequently: '*Ya Dhal-Jalālī Wa al-Ikrām*' (O You, Possessor of glory and honor). In other words, connect yourselves to it, adhere to it and be consistent in it."

In At-Tirmidhī[3] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: "If the Prophet became concerned with a matter, he would raise his head towards the sky and say: 'Subhan Allāh al-'Azim' (Glory be to Allāh The Most Mighty), and if he exerted himself in supplication, he would say : 'Yā Hay Yā Qayyum' (Perfect living, Self-sufficient).

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[1] [3476]. Also collected by Abū Dāwūd [1496]. Ibn Mājah [3855]. Imām Aḥmad [6/461].

[2] 4/177 [17596]. Also collected by al-Hakim 1/676 [1836]

[3] [3436]

Also, in At-Tirmidhī[1] on the authority of Anas bin Malik who said: "If the Prophet felt anguish, he would say: 'Ya Hayy Ya Qayyum. (Perfect living, Self-sufficient) By Your Mercy I seek aid.'"

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Hakim[2] on the authority of Abū Umāmah who narrated that the Prophet said: "The Great Name of Allāh is in three chapters of the Qur'ān: al-Baqarah, al-'Imrān and Tā Hā." Al-Qasim said: "I searched for it and found it to be 'Ya Hay ya Qayyum (Perfect living, Self-sufficient)."

'Allāmah

At-Tirmidhī and al-Hakim both narrate a statement on the authority of Sa'd bin Abi Waqqāṣ who narrated that the Prophet said: "The supplication of Dhun-Nun [Prophet Yunus] when he supplicated, while in the belly of the whale was: 'There is none worthy of worship except You, Glory to You. Indeed, I have been of the transgressors. [Lā Ilāha illa Anta Subḥānak Innī Kuntu Min al-ẓālimīn].' Indeed, no Muslim supplicates with it for anything, ever, except Allāh responds to him[3]."

Also in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Hakim[4] on the authority of Sa'd who narrated that the Prophet said: "Should I not inform you of a matter, should it fall and you supplicate with it, you shall be relieved? The supplication of Dhun-Nun [Prophet Yunus]."

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[1] [3524]

[2] 1/684 [1861]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [3856].

[3] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [3505] and al-Hakim 1/684, 685 [1862, 1863. Also collected by al-Imām Aḥmad 1/170 [1462].

[4] 1/685 [1864]. Also collected by An-Nasā'ī in the actions of the day and night via a different chain of narration [660].

Also recorded by al-Hakim[1] on the authority of Sa'd who said that he heard the Prophet said: "Shall I direct you to the greatest Name of Allāh? The supplication of Prophet Yunus." A man said: "O' Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, was it specified for Yunus?" So he replied: "Do you not hear the statement of Allāh:

فَٱسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْغَمِّ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُـۨجِى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

'So We responded to him and saved him from the distress. *And thus do We save the believers*} [al-Anbiya:88].'

Any Muslim who repeats this supplication forty times in their illness and dies, shall be awarded the reward of a martyr. If he is cured, he is cured whilst being forgiven."

In the Ṣaḥīḥs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim[2] on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas who narrates that the Messenger of Allāhﷺ would say at times of hardship: "None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh the Incomparably Great, the Compassionate. None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh the Lord of the Mighty Throne. None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh the Lord of the heavens, the Lord of the earth, and the Lord of the Honorable throne."

In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad[3] on the authority of Ali bin Abi Talib who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ taught me –in times of distress- to say: 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, The

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[1] 1/685 [1865].

[2] al-Bukhārī in the Book of Supplications, Chapter: Invocations at Times of Distress [6346] and Muslim in the Book of Remembrance and Supplications, Chapter: The Supplication of the One in Distress [2730].

[3] 1/91, 94 [701, 726]. Also collected by Ibn Ḥibbān [865]. al-Hakim 1/688-689 [1873, 1874].

Compassionate, The Most Noble, Perfectly Exalted is Allāh, Glorious is Allāh The Lord of the Mighty throne, all praise belongs to Allāh The Lord of creation.'"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Abdullah bin Mas‘ūd who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'Nobody has been struck with worry and sorrow and then says: 'O Allāh I am Your servant, the son of Your servant, my forelock is in Your Hand, Your judgment will come to pass on me, Your decree on me is just. I ask You by all the Names that You call Yourself, that You have taught to anyone from Your creation, that You have mentioned in Your Book, or that You have kept unknown in the realm of the unseen. Let the Qur'ān be the joy of my heart, the light of my chest, the remover of my sadness and the eradicator of my worries,' except that Allāh shall remove their worry and sorrow and exchange it for happiness.' It was asked: 'Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, shall we not learn it?' He replied: 'You should learn it. Anyone who hears it should learn it.'"

Ibn Mas‘ūd said: "There has not been a Prophet from amongst the Prophets who has been afflicted with hardship except that he appeals for aid through glorification of Allāh."

Ibn Abi Dunya cited in the book of *al-Mujabīn fi al-dua'*[2] on the authority of al-Hassan who said: "There was a man from the Companions of the Prophet who was known as Abū Mi'laq who was a merchant who would trade using his own wealth and the wealth of others for their gain. He would travel to distant horizons, and he was an avid worshipper and a pious person. On one occasion, he went on a journey and came into contact with a thief who was draped in weaponry. The thief said to him, 'Give me what you have, for I will kill you.' He replied, 'What do you want with my blood? Your desire is to have my wealth.' The thief said, 'As for your wealth, then it is mine, and I still want to spill your blood.' He said, 'In which case, I refuse to hand it to you, but allow me to pray four units of prayer first.' The thief replied, 'As you wish.' So he performed ablution and prayed four units. Part of his supplication in the final prostration was: "O' Wadud, Owner of the Mighty Throne, The One who does as He pleases, I beseech You by Your Might that is undisputable, Your Reign that is undeniable and by Your light that fills all sides of Your Throne to spare me from the evil of this thief. O' Mugīth aid me! O Mugīth aid me [three times].' At which point, a horseman approached with a spear in his hand that he had rested in between the ears of his horse aimed at the thief. When the thief saw him, he turned towards him, but was struck by the spear and died. Then the horseman turned towards him and said, "Get up." So he enquired 'Who are you, may my mother and father be sacrificed for you? Allāh has relieved me today through you.' The man replied, 'I am an angel from the fourth heaven, you made your first supplication and I heard a noise at the gates of the heavens, then you made your second supplication and I heard a noise from the occupants of the heavens, then you made your third supplication, and it was said to me: 'This is the supplication of one in distress.' So I asked Allāh to assign me this task.'" Al-Hassan then said: "So whoever performs ablution, prays four units and supplicates with this invocation, he shall be responded to whether he is in distress or otherwise."

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[1] 1/391 [3712]

[2] [23]

A Supplication Can Be Answered Because it Meets a Particular Condition, and Not Due to a Secret Phrase

Many times, you find that people will make a supplication and it is answered. This supplication could have corresponded with the supplicant's dire need, devotion to Allāh or a previous good deed he performed that caused a response from Allāh as an act of gratitude for the good deed. Or it could have corresponded with a time wherein the supplication is sure to be answered, thus it was answered. So one may think that the secret is in the wording of the supplication itself, which leads someone to perform the supplication with the exclusion of the aforementioned reasons that it is coupled with relating to the supplicant. This is equal to a scenario in which someone takes some medicine at the most appropriate time in the most appropriate manner, thus benefiting from it whilst others deem that merely taking the medicine without the connected factors is sufficient in attaining the objective. He is mistaken, and it is an issue that many people have erred in.

An example of this is that someone could make a supplication in dire need but happen to be at a gravesite and is answered, so the ignorant one will think that the secret defining factor is the grave, whilst he fails to realize that the secret is in his need and truthful devotion to Allāh, yet bearing in mind that if this takes place in a house from the houses of Allāh (mosques), it is better.

Supplication Is a Weapon Defined by the User, Not Solely by its Characteristic

Supplications and the various forms of seeking refuge are like a weapon, and the weapon is determined by the user and not solely on its sharpness. Thus, whenever the weapon is without defect whilst the user is strong and the preventative barriers are absent, the enemy is defeated. However, whenever one of these factors is missing, the effect becomes absent. So if the supplication in itself is inappropriate, or the person supplicating has not actualized the harmony and presence between his heart and tongue in the supplication or there is a further underlying prevention from achieving a response, the effect is not realized.

The Relationship Between the Supplication and the Divine Decree

This is a common question; it pertains to the subject of the supplication and the need for it. If it has already been decreed, it must come to pass whether an individual supplicates for it or not. On the other hand, if it has not been decreed, it will never come to pass whether an individual supplicates for it or not.

A (misguided) group has taken the belief that this is a viable question, thus they quit all supplication and said: "There is no any benefit in it!" Such people –along with their exceedingly great amount of ignorance- contradict themselves, as applying their methodology would necessitate an annulment of all means that lead to an objective.

It should be said to them: If the sense of satisfaction from food and the quenching of thirst has been decreed, it must inevitably take place whether you eat or not. Likewise, if it has not been decreed, it will not happen, whether you consume or not.

In addition, if it has been decreed that you are to conceive a child, it must happen whether you perform intercourse with your wife or not. But if it has not been decreed, then there is no need for marriage or taking a concubine and so on and so forth.

Can it then be said that this is the reasoning of a sane person or a human? In fact, the beastly animals are naturally inclined to undertake particular means in order to maintain themselves and their lives. Thus, animals are more discerning and understanding than the aforementioned group who resemble the animals, or they are in fact more astray.

Some others have feigned intelligence and said: "Occupying oneself with supplication is an absolute act of worship unconnected to anything else that Allāh will reward the supplicant for without there being any effect or outcome regarding the sought after objective in any capacity." From the perspective of this feigner of intelligence, there lies no difference between performing a supplication and withholding from it with his heart and tongue as far as it concerns the effect in attaining the objective and that the connection with a supplication is equivalent to the connection to silence - in their view - without difference.

Another group who is better at feigning intellect than the previous group declared: "That the supplication is merely a sign that Allāh has placed in order to signify the decree of a particular action." So whenever a servant has been granted the success to perform a supplication, it stands as a sign and a symbol that their affair has been fulfilled. Such as the dark and cold clouds that we see during the winter season, they exist as a proof and a sign that it will rain.

They continued to say: "This is also the ruling with the acts of obedience in relation to the reward and the disbelief and sins in relation to the punishment. They are only symbols that indicate the reward or the punishment, not that they are a means to the recompense.' In their belief, the same applies to breakages and the break, burning and being burnt, dying and death. All of which are neither means that cause the outcome nor do they possess any connection with one another apart from the ordinary occurrence in that they take place together. Not the process of cause and effect.

All of the above have conflicted with the natural senses, sound intellect, the correct legislation, the natural inclination and the other groups who exercise their intellect. In fact, they have become the laughing stock of all the intellectuals!

The correct stance is that there is a third category that has not been mentioned by the questioner. It is that the decreed event has been realized through a cause, and from its causes is supplication. It did not happen without a cause; rather, it had a cause. Therefore, whenever the servant fulfills the cause, the decreed objective shall come to pass and the opposite is also correct. This is the same as the sense of hunger and thirst being alleviated through food and drink, the conception of a child through intercourse, growing plants through the sowing if seeds and the death of an animal through its slaughter. Also, admittance into Paradise is through actions and so is the admittance into the Hellfire.

This is the correct category, and it is the one that the questioner has been denied from knowing and not guided to.

Supplication Is a Powerful Means

Supplication is amongst the strongest means. If the object that is being supplicated for comes to pass, it would not be correct to say, "There is no benefit in supplicating," as it is not correct to say: "There is no benefit in eating, drinking or any movement or action!" There is no other cause more beneficial or profound than performing a supplication in attaining the objective.

Since the Companions are the most knowledgeable people in this nation about Allāh and His Messenger and those who held the most astute understanding, it is only appropriate that they were the most accomplished in implementing this means, its conditions and its mannerisms than anyone else. Umar bin al-Khattab would seek to triumph over his enemies with it and it proved to be his mightiest force. He would say to his companions: "You are not granted victory due to your large numbers. Instead, you are granted victory from above the heavens."

He would also say: "I do not worry about the response, rather I worry about making the supplication. If I have been inspired to supplicate, then surely the response comes with it."

A poet carried this meaning and composed it in a line of poetry, he said:

If you did not want to give me what I hope and ask for — from your
generous hand, you would not have made me accustomed to ask

So whoever has been moved to perform a supplication then it is inevitable that a response has been desired for him. Allāh says:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ٱدْعُونِىٓ أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ ﴿٦٠﴾

"Invoke Me, I shall respond to you." [Ghafir:60]

He also said:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ ﴿١٨٦﴾

"If my servant asks you about Me, indeed I am near, I respond to the call of the one who calls." [al-Baqarah:186]

And in the *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Whoever does not ask Allāh, He [Allāh] becomes angry at him[1]." All this is evident of the fact that Allāh's pleasure is sought through asking and obeying Him. If The Lord is pleased with you, in that is everything that is good in contrast to His displeasure wherein lies every calamity and tragedy. Al-Imām Aḥmad recorded a (*Qudsi*) narration in the book of *Zuhd* (worldly abstinence) quoting: "I am Allāh, if I am pleased, I bestow blessings and by blessings have no end. However, if I am displeased, I afflict a curse, and my curse reaches the seventh child."

Moreover, it has been identified through sound intellect and text, natural inclination and the experiences of the various nations –regardless of the cultures, faiths and creeds- that a devotion to The Lord of creation and the pursuit of His Pleasure, Righteousness and Benevolence to His creation are all from the most powerful means of attaining all that is good, and their opposite actions are the greatest reasons that entice all that is evil. There has never been anything as significant in achieving the bounties of Allāh and repelling the harms than obedience and a devotion to Him and Benevolence to His creation.

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[1] Ibn Mājah [3827]. Also collected by At-Tirmidhī [3373]. Imām Aḥmad 2/442 [9701] and others.

In His Book, Allāh has arranged that anything that is good or bad in this world and the Hereafter be attained in accordance to actions. This applies to the recompense being in accordance to the meeting of the condition, the reason and the outcome and the cause and the effect.

Evidence of this Can Be Found in the Qur'ān in Over One Thousand Places

In places, the universal and legislative judgments appear and are arranged in the most appropriate manners, such as the statement of Allāh:

فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا۟ عَن مَّا نُهُوا۟ عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا۟ قِرَدَةً خَـٰسِـِٔينَ ﴿١٦٦﴾

"So when they were insolent about that which they had been forbidden, We said to them, "Be apes, despised" [al-Aʿrāf:166]

And His statement:

فَلَمَّآ ءَاسَفُونَا ٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَـٰهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

"And when they Angered Us, We took retribution from them and drowned them all." [al-Zukhruf:55]

And His statement:

وَٱلسَّارِقُ وَٱلسَّارِقَةُ فَٱقْطَعُوٓا۟ أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَـٰلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

"The thief, the male and the female, amputate their hands in recompense for what they committed." [al-Mā'idah:38]

And His statement:

إِنَّ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَٱلْمُسْلِمَٰتِ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ وَٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ وَٱلْقَٰنِتَٰتِ وَٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ وَٱلصَّٰدِقَٰتِ
وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ وَٱلصَّٰبِرَٰتِ وَٱلْخَٰشِعِينَ وَٱلْخَٰشِعَٰتِ وَٱلْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَٱلْمُتَصَدِّقَٰتِ وَٱلصَّٰٓئِمِينَ
وَٱلصَّٰٓئِمَٰتِ وَٱلْحَٰفِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَٱلْحَٰفِظَٰتِ وَٱلذَّٰكِرِينَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَٱلذَّٰكِرَٰتِ أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُم
مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

"Indeed the believing men and believing women," until "and those who remember Allāh a lot and the females, Allāh has prepared forgiveness for them and a great reward." [al-Ahzab:35]

Further similar examples are plentiful in the Qur'ān.

At times, it is arranged in the form of a condition and the recompense, such as:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِن تَتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ
﴿٢٩﴾

"If you are pious to Allāh, He will grant you a criterion, wipe away your sins and forgive you." [al-Anfal:29]

And His statement:

فَإِن تَابُواْ وَأَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۗ ﴿١١﴾

"If they repent and establish the prayer and pay the Zakat, then they are your brothers in the religion." [At-Tawbah:11]

And His statement:

وَأَلَّوِ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُواْ عَلَى ٱلطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَـٰهُم مَّآءً غَدَقًا ﴿١٦﴾

"And that if they had remained upon the straight path, We would have given them abundant provisions." [al-Jinn:16] And there are other similar verses.

At times, it is arranged using the Arabic letter *'lam'* (so that) that defines a reason for something to take place, such as:

كِتَـٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَـٰهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَـٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓاْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْأَلْبَـٰبِ ﴿٢٩﴾

"So that they may ponder over His signs and so that the people of understanding remember." [Sād:29]

And His statement:

لِّتَكُونُواْ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٤٣﴾

"So that they can be witnesses over the people, and so that the Messenger can be a witness over them." [al-Baqarah:143]

At times it is arranged using the Arabic letter 'kay' that also indicates the reason, such as:

كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةَۢ بَيْنَ ٱلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ﴿٧﴾

"So that it will not be a perpetual distribution among the rich from among you." [al-Hashr:7].

At times it is arranged using the letter '*Ba*' that indicates the reason for a particular event, such as the statement of Allāh:

"That is due to what their hands have put forth." [al-ʿImrān:182/al-Anfal:51]

And His statement:

بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

"...due to what they used to do." [al-Aʿrāf:43]

بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

"...due to what they used to earn." [al-Anʿām:129]

And:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا ﴿١٤٦﴾

"It is because they would deny our signs." [al-Aʿrāf:146]

At times it is arranged in a manner wherein the noun is placed after the verb in order to highlight the reason for the action, such as the statement of Allāh:

فَرَجُلٌ وَٱمْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ ﴿٢٨٢﴾

"A man and two women from those whom you trust as witnesses – so that if one of the women errs, the other can remind her." [al-Baqarah:282]

And

أَن تَقُولُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَـٰذَا غَـٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

"...lest you should say on the day of resurrection, 'Indeed we were of this, unaware.'" [al-Aʿrāf:172]

And His statement

أَن تَقُولُوٓاْ إِنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ عَلَىٰ طَآئِفَتَيۡنِ مِن قَبۡلِنَا ١٥٦

"…lest you say, 'The scripture was only sent down to two groups before us.'" [al-Anʿām:156]

i.e., disliking the fact that you may say this.

At times, it appears through the Arabic letter 'fa' (so) that appears with the reason and prior to the outcome, such as His statement:

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمۡدَمَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ رَبُّهُم بِذَنۢبِهِمۡ فَسَوَّىٰهَا ١٤

"So they denied him and hamstrung her. So their Lord brought down upon them destruction for their sin and made it equal upon them." [As-Shams:14]

And His statement:

فَعَصَوۡاْ رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمۡ فَأَخَذَهُمۡ أَخۡذَةٗ رَّابِيَةً ١٠

"…and they disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord, so He seized them with a seizure of fierce proportion." [al-Haqah:10]

And His statement:

فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَكَانُواْ مِنَ ٱلۡمُهۡلَكِينَ ٤٨

"…so they denied them and were of those destroyed." [al-Mu'minūn:48] and their likes.

At times, the recompense is highlighted after the Arabic letter 'lamma' (when they), such as:

فَلَمَّآ ءَاسَفُونَا ٱنتَقَمۡنَا مِنۡهُمۡ ﴿٥٥﴾

"...and when they Angered us, We took retribution." [Az-Zukhruf:55] and its like.

Sometimes the recompense appears after the Arabic term 'Inna' (indeed), such as:

إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِي ٱلۡخَيۡرَٰتِ ﴿٩٠﴾

"Indeed, they would hasten to do good." [al-Anbiya:90]

And the opposite recompense can also appear in the same manner.

إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ قَوۡمَ سَوۡءٖ فَأَغۡرَقۡنَٰهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

"Indeed, they were an evil people, so We drowned them all." [al-Anbiya:77]

In other places, the recompense is defined using the term 'law la' (had it not been) in order to connect the opening phase with the succeeding one, such as:

فَلَوۡلَآ أَنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُسَبِّحِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾ لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطۡنِهِۦٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ يُبۡعَثُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

"Had it not been that he was from those who perform remembrance – he would have remained in its belly until the day they are resurrected." [As-Saffat:143-144]

It can also appear through the medium of 'law' (if) that is conditional:

وَلَوۡ أَنَّهُمۡ فَعَلُواْ مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِۦ لَكَانَ خَيۡرٗا لَّهُمۡ وَأَشَدَّ تَثۡبِيتٗا ﴿٦٦﴾

"If they had done what they were instructed, it would have been better for them." [An-Nisa':66]

In summary, the Qur'ān from beginning to end clearly defines that the recompense for evil and good and the universal occurrences have a reason, in fact, the judgments in the worldly life and the Hereafter as well as their harms and benefits are all in accordance to their causes and particular actions. Therefore, whoever truly understands this point and considers it thoroughly, will benefit from it immensely and not ignorantly and erroneously depend on the Divine Decree as an excuse for his inability, neglect and squandering of affairs which will only equate to a reversal of affairs in that his reliance will amass to non-action, and his non-action will be his method of reliance.

Rather, the knowledgeable one will refer the Divine Decree to other decreed matters and explain it in the same manner. As a matter of fact, it is not possible to live any other way. Hunger, thirst, cold and other dangers and cautionary things are from the Divine Decree, and the entire creation endeavors to repel such decreed matters with other acts that have also been decreed.

This is how it would appear to the one who has been granted success by Allāh and guided. He would repel the decreed punishment in the Hereafter with the decreed act of repentance, correct faith and righteous actions. This is the scale of the undesirable Divine Decree (punishments etc.), and the opposite is also correct. As the Lord of both realms is One, His Wisdom is perfect and one and is not contradictory nor does it disaffirm itself.

However, Two Matters Have Yet To Be Mentioned. Through Them, One Can Attain Complete Happiness and Success.

The first: To know the details of evil and good whilst possessing insight into that gained by the observations one makes of the world, personal experiences and whatever he has heard about previous and current civilizations. The most beneficial way to execute this is by thoroughly contemplating the Qur'ān, because it contains this information in the most complete manner and contains all the reasons for evil and good in detail and precision. The Qur'ān is followed by the *Sunnah* (Prophetic way). It is its counterpart and the second revelation. Thus, whoever dedicates their concern to them both shall be sufficed with them over all else, as they will both portray the good and evil along with their causes, as if you are literally observing it.

After this sequence of observations, if you were to ponder over the news about the nations throughout time, and the significant days of Allāh that the people of obedience and disobedience experienced, whilst corresponding this to the knowledge you have learnt from the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah,* and having come across the details that Allāh has outlined and promised, and you know His signs that He has set in the horizons, you will come to realize that the Qur'ān is the truth, the Messenger is a true Messenger and that Allāh will fulfill His promise without fail. This is because history is a detailed account to some aspects that Allāh and His Messenger have informed us of in relation to the overall causes for good and evil.

The second: To beware of misleading yourself in your implementation of the causes. This is from the most important matters. The servant will unavoidably know that sins and heedlessness are from the causes for harm in his own worldly affairs and his Hereafter. Yet his soul may mislead itself in erroneously depending on the pardon and forgiveness of Allāh at times, procrastination at times, uttering a superficial word that only has an effect on the tongue to seek forgiveness at times, performing permissible actions at times, gaining some knowledge at times, falsely using the excuse of the Divine Decree at times and excusing oneself by the actions of his peers and following those greater in stature than him at other times.

Many people assume that they can perpetrate whatever they want before saying 'I ask for forgiveness' and all effects of the sin will be eradicated!

A man who (falsely) ascribes himself to knowledge once said to me: "I do as I please, then I say: 'Subhan Allāh Wa Bi Hamdihi' one hundred times, and all of my sins shall be forgiven, as it has been authentically reported from the Prophet who said: 'Whoever says in a day 'Subhan Allāh Wa Bi Hamdihi' one hundred times, his misdeeds will be pardoned even if they amounted to the foam of the sea.'"[1]

Another man from the people of Makkah said to me: "If any one of us performs a sin, regardless of its proportion, he would bathe and circumambulate around the Ka'bah seven times and it would be wiped from him."

Another individual said to me: "It has been authentically reported from the Prophet that he said: 'A servant committed a sin and then said, 'O my Lord! I have sinned, please forgive me!' thus, he is forgiven. Then he remains without committing any sin for a while and then again commits another sin and says, 'O my Lord, I have committed another sin, please forgive me,' thus, he is forgiven. Then he remains without committing another sin for a while and then commits another sin and says, 'O my Lord, I have committed another sin, please forgive me,' and Allāh says, 'My slave has known that he has a Lord Who forgives sins and punishes for it, I therefore have forgiven My slave, he can do as he wills.'"[1] He continued to say, "I do not have any doubt that I have a Lord Who forgives the sins and punishes for them."

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[1] Reported on the authority of Abū Hurairah –Allāh be pleased with him–. Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Supplications, Chapter: The Virtue of Remembrance [6405]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of Remembrance and Supplications [2691].

This particular category of people has clung onto the texts about having hope and has relied on them and has attached onto them with both hands. If he is admonished for a mistake and being engrossed into it, he begins to recount all that he has memorized pertaining to the limitless Mercy and Forgiveness of Allāh from the words of hope.

The ignoramuses who are part of this category of people have mentioned strange and peculiar statements, such as:

Increase in whatever you can of mistakes — If you will arrive to One Who is Generous

Another of them said: "Purifying oneself from sin is ignorance of the limitless of Allāh's Pardon."

Another one said: "Abandoning sin is audacity in the face of the Forgiveness of Allāh and a belittlement of it!"

Abū Muhammad Ibn Hazm said: "I have witnessed some of them say: 'Allāh, I seek refuge in You from infallibility.'"

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[1] Collected in al-Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurairah in The Book of Tawhid (Monotheism), Chapter: The Statement of Allāh {They wish to alter the speech of Allāh} [7507]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of Repentance, Chapter: The Acceptance of Repentance From Sins Even if the Sin and the Repentance Is Repeated [2758].

From amongst these deluded individuals are those who cling onto the doctrine of *Jabr,* which is the belief that a servant does not have any free will to act or any choice; instead, he is compelled to commit disobedience. Also, from them are those who are deceived by the doctrine of *Irja'* in that faith is comprised of a mere attestation whilst actions are excluded from faith and the faith of an immoral person equates to the faith of angels(s) Jibrīl and Mikā'īl.

Additionally, from them, are those who are deceived by their love for the 'ascetics', the 'scholars' and the 'righteous'. They frequent their gravesites, plead to them, seek their intercession and seek that they are intermediaries between himself and Allāh and asks Allāh by their right and holiness.

From them also are those who are deceived into believing that their forefathers and predecessors maintain a high status with Allāh and are from the special ones. Thus, they will not beseech Him for relief, just as it is the case in the presence of the kings in the worldly life. The kings in the worldly life have their nearest entourage intervene to seek a pardon for the wrongs of their children or relatives, and if any of them commit a heinous deed, their father or grandfather rescues them using their status.

Some others are deceived by the fact that Allāh is not in need of delivering a punishment in the least, and that exercising His Punishment does not enrich His Sovereignty, and bestowing His Mercy does not decrease anything from His Sovereignty. So this individual will say: 'I am in dire need of His Mercy, and He is Has absolute ownership of everything. If a poor and destitute person were in dire need of a drink of water in the presence of someone who owns a house with a running river, he would not deny him a drink. Well, Allāh is more Generous and Giving than that, Forgiving someone does not decrease Him in the slightest and delivering a punishment does not increase His sovereignty in the slightest.

Also, from them are those who have been deluded by an erroneous understanding that he and his likes have mistakenly extracted from the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. So they completely relied on it. An example of which is their reliance on the statement of Allāh in addressing the Messenger:

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰٓ ٥

"And your Lord is going to give you, and you will be satisfied." [Ad-Duha:5]

They say: The Messenger will not be satisfied if anyone from his nation is in the Hellfire. This is a form of the most extreme ignorance and clearest of lies, as he is pleased with whatever his Lord is pleased with, and Allāh is pleased that the oppressors, corrupt ones, dishonest ones and those who are persistent upon major sins are punished. Far removed is His Messenger from ever being displeased with something that his Lord is pleased with. Also, their reliance on the statement of Allāh:

۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًاۚ ٥٣

"Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins." [Az-Zumar:53]

This form of reliance is also from the worst cases of ignorance, as polytheism is included in this instance whilst it is the greatest sin and the origin of all sin. However, there is no disagreement that this verse refers to the repentant ones because Allāh will forgive every sin for the one who repents, regardless of its nature. If this verse was not in reference to the repentant ones, all the texts of punishment would become null and void along with the narrations that prove that a group of people amongst the monotheists shall be removed from the Hellfire through an intercession. This belief has crept into the individual due to his own lack of knowledge and understanding, because Allāh generalized in the aforementioned verse, so it was known that he intended those who repent. However, in the chapter of *An-Nisa',* He specified and restricted it, He said:

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغۡفِرُ أَن يُشۡرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغۡفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ ﴿٤٨﴾

"Indeed, Allāh does not forgive that you set partners with Him [unless it is repented from before death], and He forgives anything lesser than that to whomsoever He wills." [An-Nisa':48]

Here, Allāh informs that He does not forgive polytheism yet forgives anything lesser than that. But if this verse were in reference to the one who has repented, there would not be a difference between the sin of polytheism and all other sins (because Allāh accepts the repentance from polytheism).

Also, such as the delusion of some of the ignorant ones from the statement of Allāh:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلۡكَرِيمِ﴿٦﴾

"O' mankind, what has deluded you in respects to your Noble Lord?" [al-Infitar:6]

He will respond: "His generosity!" Others may say: "The deceived one has been informed of his excuse for the sins." Undoubtedly, this is extreme ignorance. In fact, the chief deceiver –Satan– and the person's soul that commands with evil along with his own ignorance and whims have deceived him.

Allāh revealed the verse with the word 'Karīm' (Noble), whilst He is the Supreme Master and obeyed One Whom a person can never be deluded about nor can one ever neglect His rights. Therefore, the deluded one has become deceived about the One Whom it is unbefitting to ever be deceived about.

Also, such as the delusion of some of them as it pertains to the statement of Allāh about the Hellfire:

لَا يَصْلَىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْأَشْقَى ﴿١٥﴾ ٱلَّذِى كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١٦﴾

"None will reach therein except the wretched one – who has denied and turned away." [al-Layl:15-16]

And His statement

أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

"It has been prepared for the disbelievers." [al-Baqarah:24]

Yet this deceived individual failed to realize that the statement of Allāh:

فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾

"I have warned you of a fire that is blazing." [al-Layl:14]

(The previous verse) is in reference to a specific fire in the depths of the Hellfire.

If it (verse 15-16) were in reference to the entire Hellfire, He would have said (None shall enter it), but instead He said **"None will reach therein."** Not reaching a particular place does not necessitate not entering it in totality, as reaching a place is more specific than an entrance into a place, and negating what is more specific does not necessitate a negation of it all.

In addition, if this deluded individual were to ponder over the succeeding verse, he would come to know it would not refer to him, thus it would not be in his capacity to avoid it.

As for the other statement about the Hellfire:

أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

"prepared for the disbelievers," [al-Baqarah:24]

Then He has also mentioned the same about Paradise:

۞ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

"prepared for the pious." [al-ʿImrān:133]

This preparation of the Hellfire for the disbelievers does not nullify the possibility of the immoral and oppressive ones also entering it, whilst the preparation of Paradise for the pious does not negate the possibility of it being entered by someone with the most miniscule amount of faith and the one who never performed any good.

Also, such as the reliance of some of them in performing the fast of *Ashura*[1] or '*Arafa*[2], to the extent some of them will say: "Fasting the day of *Ashura* will expiate the sins of the entire year and fasting the day of '*Arafa* will be an extra reward." But this deluded individual is not aware that fasting the month of Ramadan and establishing the five daily prayers is greater and more highly regarded than fasting the days of *Ashura* and '*Arafa,* whilst these actions expiate the sins that are performed in between on the condition that the major sins have been avoided.

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[1] 10th of the month of Muharram in the Islāmic calendar

[2] 9th of the month of Thul-Hijjah in the Islām calendar

The succession of fasting each month of Ramadan after the other and establishing the Friday prayers does not amount to enough of a means to expiate the minor sins unless these actions are coupled with the abandonment of the major sins. Thus, collectively they are strong enough of a means to expiate the minor sins. So how can performing a voluntary fast of one day be enough of a means to expiate every major sin that the servant has perpetrated whilst he is still persistent upon it and non-repentant? This is an impossibility, even though it is viable that fasting the day of '*Arafa* and the Day of Ashura is a general expiation to the sins of that particular year and that this information is from the words of good promise that apply with conditions. However, a persistent indulgence in major sins is an impediment to this expiation being fulfilled. So if he ceases to persist in perpetrating major sins, the fasting of those days and his lack of persistence will both aid one another in the overall expiation, just as fasting the month of Ramadan and establishing the five daily prayers along with not performing the major sins are all reasons that aid one another in expiating the minor sins, bearing in mind Allāh has stated:

إِن تَجْتَنِبُواْ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾

"If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins." [An-Nisa':31]

Through this, one will know that having a particular means for expiation does not inhibit the possibility of another means supporting it in the expiation of sins; consequently making the expiation that takes place via a combination of the two means is stronger and more complete than isolating only one means, and the stronger the means for an expiation are, the stronger and more comprehensive and complete the expiation becomes.

Also, such as the reliance by some of them on the statement of the Prophet wherein he narrates from his Lord:

"I am to My servant however he thinks of Me, so he can think as he pleases."[1] i.e., whatever he thinks of Me, I will carry out on him.

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad 3/491 [16016]

A Good Thought About the Lord Can Only Happen With Obedience

Undeniably, good thoughts rightfully occur when there are good actions. The good doer has adopted good thoughts about his Lord that He will reward him for his good, not betray His promise and accept his repentance. As for the evildoer and the one persistent in perpetrating major sins, oppression and defiance, the despondency that he attains from sins and oppression and criminality will prevent him from adopting good thoughts about his Lord. This is a reality that is being witnessed. The absconding evildoer who has left the obedience of his Master will not hold a good thought about Him, and the despondency of wrong can never be matched alongside good thoughts. Surely, the evildoer is as despondent as his degree of evil, and the best of those who have good thoughts about their Lord are those who are most obedient to Him, as al-Hasan al-Basri mentioned: "The believer refined his thoughts about his Lord, consequently he refined his actions. But the immoral one spoiled his thoughts of his Lord, consequently he spoiled his actions."

How can one have good thoughts about his Lord whilst he is fleeing from Him, indulgent in the things that anger Him, exposed and subjected to His curse, has deemed that the right and commands of his Lord are insignificant and squandered them whilst his Lord's prohibitions he has taken lightly and decided to violate them and persist upon that!?

How can someone who wages an open war with his Lord, have enmity to His allies, ally with His adversaries, deny His perfect Attributes, hold an erroneous belief in the Attributes that He and His Messengers have ascribed to Him whilst deeming that all of the news that has reached us of that is misguidance and disbelief ever have a good thought of Him.

How can one who believes the Lord does not speak, nor command, nor prohibit, nor become pleased or becomes angry ever have a good thought about Him?

Allāh has stated the condition of those who have the slightest doubt in His Ability to Hear minute details in the statement:

وَذَٰلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَىٰكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

"And that was your assumption that you assumed about your Lord. It has brought you to ruin, and you have become among the losers." [Fussilat:23]

These people in question, when they assumed that Allāh does not know much of what they do, it was considered as having bad thoughts about their Lord, thus, it brought them to ruin. And this is the case with anyone who denies Allāh's perfect Attributes or describes Him in a manner unbefitting to His Majesty. If this person believes that this belief will admit him into Paradise, he has fallen victim to delusion, self-deception and an allurement by Satan. It certainly is not good thoughts about his Lord.

So Contemplate Over This, and Reflect Over the Dire Need For Having Good Thoughts!

How can it be that the heart harmonizes between the certitude that he will inevitably meet his Lord, He hears his words, sees his whereabouts, knows his secret affairs and the public ones, nothing is ever concealed from Him and that he will be made to stand before His Lord to be held to account for all of what he has done, whilst he chooses to partake in the things that anger His Lord, whilst he squanders the Lords commands and denies His rights? All this and he believes he has good thoughts about his Lord? Is this anything other than a self-deception and delusional false hope?

Abū Umāmah bin Sahl bin Hunayf mentioned: "Urwah bin Az-Zubayr and I entered to 'Aisha and she said: 'If you had seen the Messenger of Allāhﷺ during one of his illnesses when I only possessed six or –seven- *dinars*[1], yet the Messenger of Allāhﷺ instructed me to distribute them.' She further went on to say: 'However, I became busy in tending to his needs during his pain until he was cured by Allāh. He then asked me: 'What did you do? Did you distribute the six *dinars?*' I replied: 'No, by Allāh I was busied with your illness.' So she said: 'He asked for the money, placed it in his hand and said: 'What would Muhammadﷺ be thinking if he met Allāh whilst these were still in his possession?'"[2] In another wording: "What would the Prophet of Allāh be thinking if he met Allāh whilst these were still in his possession?"

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[1] The currency used at the time

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad* 6/104 [24733].

What would the perpetrators of major sins and oppression be thinking about Allāh when they meet Him whilst they have wronged the people? If their claim of "We thought well of our Lord" held any substance to it, there would not be a single tyrant or sinful person punished. In which case, he can do as he pleases, and partake in all that Allāh has prohibited him from as long as he thinks well of Allāh, the fire shall not touch him! *Subhan Allāh!* See what deception can do to a servant!

Prophet Ibrahim said to his people:

أَئِفْكًا ءَالِهَةً دُونَ ٱللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ﴿٨٦﴾ فَمَا ظَنُّكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ﴿٨٧﴾

"Is it falsehood as gods other than Allāh you desire?!" [As-Saffat:86-87]

i.e., how do you think He will deal with you when you meet Him having worshipped other than Him?

Good Thoughts About Allāh Are Essential Alongside Performing Good Actions

Whoever thoroughly contemplates over the aforementioned shall come to know that having good thoughts about Allāh happens with performing good actions. Undeniably, the servant is drawn to good actions by his good thoughts about his Lord in that He shall recompense him for his actions, reward him for them and accept them from him. The driving factor that led him to good actions was the good thoughts, and the more his thoughts excel, the better his actions become. On the other hand, good thoughts alongside an adherence to whims and desires are a defective weakness. As has been reported in At-Tirmidhī and the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad in a narration on the authority of Shaddad bin Aws who reported from the Prophet who said: "The astute one is he who holds himself to account and performs actions for the life after death. As for the helpless one, he is someone who allows his soul to follow its desires and has a false hope in Allāh."[1]

In summary, good thoughts can only be actualized when attached to the means of success. As for the reasons of destruction, they can never result in good thoughts. If it is said: "No, rather is it possible, as good thoughts can be based on the expansive forgiveness of Allāh, His Mercy, Pardon and Generosity, and that his Mercy has overtaken His Anger and that inflicting a punishment will not benefit Him nor will His Pardon harm him," it could also be said: "The matter is as you have said, and Allāh is even far more elevated than that and more Noble and Generous.

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2459]. al-Imām Aḥmad 4/124 [17123]. Ibn Mājah [4260]. al-Hakim 1/125 [191] and others.

However, this should be understood appropriately, as He is attributed to having perfect Wisdom, Honor, Reprisal and severe punishment and reprimanding those who deserve to be reprimanded. If he made a determination to have good thoughts strictly based on the Lord's Names and Attributes, then the righteous and the immoral and the believer and the disbeliever would be united. How could the criminal possibly be aided by His Names and Attributes if he is drawn into the actions that anger Him and bring about His resentment, become exposed to sins, delved into His prohibitions and violate His boundaries? On the contrary, having good thoughts will benefit those who repent, regret and renounce their misdeeds, perform a righteous deed in place of an evil one and approach the remainder of their life with goodness and obedience, and then enhance their good thoughts. The latter is good thoughts, and the first is deception! Allāh's Aid is sought.

So do not deem that this segment has been too long, because the need for it is dire. Note that there is a difference between having good thoughts about Allāh, and between being deceived.

Allāh said:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِۚ ﴿٢١٨﴾

"Indeed, those who have believed and those who emigrated and fought for the sake of Allāh, they are the ones who hope for the mercy of Allāh." [al-Baqarah:218]

Allāh also said:

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا فُتِنُواْ ثُمَّ جَٰهَدُواْ وَصَبَرُوٓاْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهَا لَغَفُورٞ
رَّحِيمٞ ﴿١١٠﴾

"Then, indeed your Lord, to those who emigrated after they had been compelled to renounce their religion and thereafter fought [for the cause of Allāh] and were patient – indeed, your Lord, after that, is Forgiving and Merciful." [An-Nahl:110]

Here, Allāh informs that He is Forgiving and Merciful to whoever implements these actions. Thus, the knowledgeable one is the one who places the hope in its rightful place, and the ignorant one is the one who misplaces it.

Narrations That Should Deter the Ignorant and Deluded Sinner, by the Mercy of Allāh

Many ignorant people have inappropriately relied on the Mercy, Pardon and Generosity of Allāh and squandered His orders, prohibitions and forgot that He is severe in punishment and that His punishment cannot be repelled from those who are criminals. But whoever relies on His Pardon whilst he is insistent upon sins is like the stubborn one.

Ma'ruf said: "Your hope for mercy from one whom you do not obey is delusion and feeblemindedness."

Some of the scholars have also said: "Whoever takes a limb from you in this worldly life as a penalty for theft of something worth three *dirhams,* do not fall into a false sense of security that His punishment in the Hereafter with be similar."

It was said to al-Hasan: "We see that you cry a lot!" He replied: "I fear that He will cast me into the fire without consideration."

A man asked al-Hasan and said: "O Abū Saʿīd, what are we to do when we sit in a gathering with people who strike a fear into us to the extent our hearts feel like escaping?" He replied: "By Allāh, for you to accompany people who strike this fear into you until you attain safety and security from the punishment is better than accompanying a people who assure you with a false sense of security until you reach the dangers and perils."

It has been authentically reported in the Ṣaḥīḥs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim[1] on the authority of Usāmah bin Zayd who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say: "A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown in the Hell Fire, and his intestines will spill out, and he will encircle them like a donkey goes around a millstone. The people of Hell Fire will gather around him and say: 'O so-and-so! What is wrong with you? Didn't you order us to do good deeds and forbid us to do bad deeds?' He will reply: 'Yes, I used to order you to do good deeds, but I did not do them myself, and I used to forbid you to do bad deeds, yet I used to do them myself.'"

Al Imām Aḥmad[2] recorded a narration on the authority of Abū Rafi' who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ passed by al-Baqi' cemetery and said: 'Uff to you! Uff to you!' So I thought that he was referring to me, instead he said: 'No, that was the grave of so-and-so whom I had sent to collect Zakat from the tribe of so-and-so, but he stole a *Namirah* [a type of cloak] and now he is cloaked with something similar made of Fire.'"

Also, in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[3] is a narration on the authority of Anas bin Malik who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'On the night I was taken into the heavens, I passed by a group of people who had their lips cut with scissors made of fire, so I asked 'Who are they?' They replied: 'They are the sermon givers of the worldly life, they used to command the people to do good, but forget themselves, did they not comprehend?'"

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of the Beginning of Creation, chapter: The Description of the Hellfire and that it is created [3267]. Collected by Muslim in The Book of Worldly Abstinence and Heart Softeners, Chapter: The Punishment for the One Who Commands To Do Good and Does Not Do It Himself [2989].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 6/392 [27192]. Collected by An-Nasā'ī [862, 863].

[3] 3/120 [12211]

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Anas bin Malik who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'When I was taken up to heaven, I passed by people who had nails of copper and were scratching their faces and their chests. I said, 'Who are these people, Jibrīl?' He replied: 'They are those who backbite the people and malign the people's honor.'"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] on the authority of Anas bin Malik who said: "The Prophet would frequently say, 'O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart steadfast upon Your religion.' So we enquired: 'O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, we have believed in you and what you have been sent with, do you still fear for us?' He replied: 'Yes, indeed, the hearts are between the two Fingers of Allāh, He turns them as He wills.'"

Also, in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[3] is a narration on the authority of Anas bin Malik that states: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said to Jibrīl: 'Why do I never see Mikā'īl ever laugh?' He replied: 'He has not laughed since the Hellfire was created.'"

Muslim reports in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[4], on the authority of Anas bin Malik who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'From the inmates of Hell, a person who had led the most luxurious life in this world will be brought up on the Day of Resurrection and dipped once in the Fire and will be asked: 'O son of Adam! Did you ever experience any comfort? Did you happen to obtain any luxury?' He will reply: 'By Allāh, no, my Lord.' And then one of the people of Paradise who had experienced extreme hardship in the life of this world will be dipped in Paradise. Then he will be asked: 'O son of Adam! Did you ever experience any hardship? Did you ever encounter difficulty?' He will say: ‘By Allāh, no my Lord, I neither experienced misery nor passed through hardship.’”

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[1] 3/224 [13340]. Also collected by Abū Dāwūd [4878, 4879].

[2] 3/112 [12107]. Also collected by At-Tirmidhī [2140].

[3] 3/224 [13343]. Also recorded by Ibn 'Abdil-Bar in At-Tamhīd [5/9].

[4] Collected by Muslim in the Book of hypocrites [2807].

Also, in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] is the narration of al-Bara’ bin ‘Āzib who said: “We went out with the Prophet to a burial of a man from the Ansar [the Companions who were from the people of Madinah] until we arrived at the grave, and he still had not been placed in the slot of the grave. Then the Messenger of Allāhﷺ sat down and we sat around him, as if birds were upon our heads from our stillness, and in the hand of the Messenger of Allāhﷺ was a stick that he was poking the ground with. He began to look at the sky. Then he said to us: ‘Ask Allāh for refuge from the torment of the grave.’ He repeated this command two or three times. Then he said: ‘Indeed, the believing servant, in their journey from this life to the Hereafter, angels will descend upon him, their faces will be bright as if they were suns, they will have a shroud from the shrouds of Paradise with them, and an embalmment from those of heaven. Then they will sit by them within eyesight and the Angel of Death will come and sit at his head and will say, ‘O you virtuous soul, come out to a forgiveness and pleasure from your Lord.’ So it will come out as a drop comes out of the mouth of a jug (with ease), then he will take it, not leaving it in his hand for longer that a blink of an eye until they (he and the other angels) place it in that shroud and that embalmment. And there will emanate a smell like that of the most sweet smelling musk on the face of the earth from it. Then they shall ascend with it, and they shall not pass with it by any group of angels but they will say: ‘What is this good and sweet-smelling soul?’ Then they shall say to them (he is) "such and such" the son of "such and such" choosing the best of the names he used to be called by in this life. Until they reach the lowest sky, then they shall ask permission to enter, they shall be granted entry, until they end at the seventh heaven. Then Allāh, Exalted and High, shall say: 'Record the book of my servant in *`illiyeen* [the seventh heaven], and his book will be written in *`illiyeen*, and it shall be said, 'Return him to the earth, for I have created them from it, and into it I shall return them, and from it I shall extract (resurrect) them a second time.' So he is returned to earth and his soul is returned to his body before two angels come and sit him up next to them and ask him: 'Who is your Lord?' He shall reply: 'My Lord is Allāh.' Then they shall ask him: 'What is your religion?' He shall answer them: 'My religion is Islām.' Then they shall ask him: 'Who is this man who was sent among you?' He will reply: 'He is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.' Then they shall ask him: 'How did you know?' He shall reply: 'I read the book of Allāh, I believed in it and accepted it.' Then a caller will call from the sky: 'My slave has spoken the truth, so spread out for him from the heaven, and clothe him from the heaven, and open a door for him from the heaven (within his grave).' So its goodness and its smell will come unto him, then his grave will be expanded for him as far as he can see.

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[1] 4/287 [18534]. Also collected by Abū Dāwūd [3212, 4753].

Then a man will come to him. His face will be handsome, and his clothes will be pristine, and his smell will be sweet. Then he shall say to him: 'I bring you glad tidings of that which will make you happy. This is the day that you were promised.' Then he will say: 'Who are you? For your face is the face of someone who comes with good news.' He shall reply: 'I am your good deeds.' Then he shall say: 'My Lord, bring the hour so that I might return to my family and my wealth.'

The Prophet went on to say: 'As for the disbelieving one, if he is leaving this life and journeying to the Hereafter, then Angels will descend upon him, their faces will be dark, they have with them a course woolen fabric. Then they will sit within eyeshot of him. Then the Angel of Death will come and sit at his head and will say: 'O you wicked soul, come out to the anger of your Lord and a fury [from Him].' So his soul will be spread out throughout his body and it will be ripped away as a skewer is ripped out of damp cotton, then he will take it [the soul], not leaving it in his hand for longer than a blink of an eye until they have placed it in sackcloth. And there will emanate from it a stench like that of the most evil smelling corpse on the face of the earth. Then they shall ascend with it, and they shall not pass with it by a group of Angels but they will say: 'What is this wicked soul?' Then they shall say to them "such and such" the son of "such and such" choosing the most hated of the names he used to be called in this life. Until they reach the lowest heaven, then they shall ask permission to enter, and they shall not be granted entry. Then the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ recited:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ عَنْهَا لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَٰبُ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ
يَلِجَ ٱلْجَمَلُ فِى سَمِّ ٱلْخِيَاطِ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

"The doors of the sky are not opened to them, nor shall they enter heaven until the camel passes through the eye of the needle." [al-Aʿrāf:40]

Then Allāh, Exalted and High, shall say: 'Write the book of my servant in *Sijjeen* [the lowest earth].' And his soul shall be cast away. Then the Prophet recited:

وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ ٱلطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِى بِهِ ٱلرِّيحُ فِى مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ ﴿٣١﴾

"And those who associate partners with Allāh, they are as one who falls from the sky then is snatched by the birds or is cast by the wind into a remote place." [al-Hajj:31]

Then his soul will be returned into his body. The Prophet said: 'Two harsh, severe and fearsome angels shall come and sit him up and shall ask him: 'Who is your Lord?' He shall reply: 'Huh, Huh, I don't know.' Then they shall ask him: 'What is your religion?' He shall answer them: 'Huh, Huh, I don't know.' Then they shall ask him 'Who is this man who was sent among you?' He will reply: 'Huh, Huh, I don't know.' The Prophet said: 'Then a caller will call from the sky: 'My slave has spoken falsely, so spread out for him from the Hellfire, and open a door for him from the Hellfire (within his grave).' So its heat and hot wind will come unto him, his grave will be contracted upon him until his limbs overlap. A man will then come to him. His face will be ugly, and his clothes will be hideous, and his smell will be vile. Then he shall say unto him: 'I bring you tidings of that which will harm you. This is the day that you were promised.' Then he will say, 'Who are you? For your face is the face of someone who comes with evil.' He shall reply: 'I am your evil deeds.' Then he shall say: 'My Lord do not bring the hour.'"

In another wording also recorded in the *Musnad*[1]: "He will be assigned a blind, deaf and mute person who holds in his hand a hammer, if a mountain were hit with it, it would disintegrate. He will strike him with it once and will disintegrate before Allāh renders him to his initial form, and he will beat him again, and he (the wicked) will cry out a painful cry that can be heard by all creatures except humans and jinn." Al-Bara' added: "A door of Hell will be opened unto him and something of the Hellfire will be spread out for him."

Also in the Musnad of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] on the authority al-Bara' bin "Āzib who said: "On an occasion, we were with the Messenger of

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[1] 4/295-296 [18614].

[2] 4/294 [18601]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4195] and al-Bukhārī in At-Tarīkh al-Kabīr [1/229].

Allāh when he saw a group of people at a distance and said: 'Why have they gathered?' 'For a grave they want to dig,' they replied. So he suddenly left his Companions and swiftly went over to the gravesite until he reached it, he kneeled down on both his knees so I faced him in order to see what he would do. He sat at the edge of the grave weeping until the ground became wet. Then he turned to us and said: 'O my brothers, prepare yourselves for this.'"

Also, in the *Musnad*[1] on the authority of Buraydah, he said: "The Messenger of Allāh came out to us one day and said three times: 'O' people! Do you know the similitude between you and I?' They replied: 'Allāh and His Messenger know best.' He said: 'The similitude of you and I is the same as a group of people who feared their enemy encroaching upon them, so they sent a man to keep watch, he saw the enemy and came back to warn his people, but he feared that the enemy would overtake them before he could warn them.' At this point, he threw up his garment and said: 'O' people, you have been encroached, you have been encroached.' He said this three times.

A narration on the authority of Jabir has been reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim.[2] Jabir says: "The Messenger of Allāh said: 'Every intoxicant is forbidden. Indeed, Allāh the Exalted and Majestic made a covenant to those who drank intoxicants to give them their drink from *Tinat al-Khabal*. They said: 'Allāh's Messenger, what is *Tinat al-Khabal*?' He said: 'It is the sweat of the occupants of Hell or the discharge of the occupants of Hell.'"

Also in the *Musnad*[3] on the authority of Abū Thar who said: "The Messenger of Allāh said: 'Indeed I see what you do not see, and I hear what you do not hear. The Heavens have creaked, and they have the right to creak. There is no spot, the size of four fingers in them, except that there is an Angel placing his forehead in it, prostrating to Allāh. By Allāh! If you knew what I know, then you would laugh little and you would cry much. And you would not taste the pleasures of your women in the beds, and you would go out into the plains beseeching Allāh.' Abū Thar added: 'I wish that I was but a tree that was chewed.'"

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[1] 5/348 [22948].

[2] Book of drinks, chapter: Every intoxicant is forbidden [2002].

[3] 5/173 [21516]. Also collected by At-Tirmidhī [2312]. Ibn Mājah [4190]. al-Hakim

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Ḥudhayfah who said: "We were with the Messenger of Allāhﷺ during a funeral procession. When we reached the actual grave, he sat at its edge and would repeatedly look at the grave, then he said: 'The believer will be squeezed once in it until his organs intertwine, and it will fill up with fire for the disbeliever.'"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] on the authority of Jabir who said: "We went out with the Messenger of Allāhﷺ to perform the funeral of Sa'd bin Mu'ādh. When the Messenger of Allāhﷺ prayed over him and he was placed in his grave and it was leveled. The Messenger of Allāhﷺ began to glorify Allāh for a long period of time, and then he made *takbir,* so we did the same. It was then said: "Why did you make *tasbih* and then *takbir*?" He replied: (The grave of this pious servant was squeezed until Allāh eventually relieved him).

A narration has been collected by al-Bukhārī in his Ṣaḥīḥ3, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudri states: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'When a dead body is prepared, and the men carry it on their shoulders, if the deceased was

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2/554 [3883]. al-Bazzar in his *Musnad* [3924, 3925] and others.

[1] 5/407 [23457].

[2] 3/360 [14873].

[3] Book of funerals, chapter: The men carry the deceased, not the women [1314].

pious, it will say: 'Take me in haste,' but if he was not, it will say: 'Woe to it. Where are you taking me?' Everything except man hears its voice. If the human being were to hear its voice, he would have surely died.'"

Also in the Musnad of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Abū Umāmah who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'On the Day of Resurrection, the sun draws as close as a mile and a certain amount of heat will be added to it. The heads will boil just as the cooking pots boil. The people will sweat in accordance to their misdeeds, from them are those whose sweat will reach their ankles, from them are those whose sweat will reach their shins, from them are those whose sweat will reach their mid-section and from them are those who will be drowned in their sweat.'"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] as has been reported by Ibn 'Abbas who narrated from the Prophet who said: "How can I bask in the favors when the blower of the trumpet has already drawn the trumpet near and arched his head forward to hear the moment he will be ordered to blow, before eventually blowing?" The Companions said: "What should we say?" He replied: "Say: *Hasbuna Allāh Wa Ni'ma Al-Wakīl Wa 'Ala Allāh Tawakalna* [Allāh is sufficient for us and the best guardian, on Allāh we rely.]"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[3] in a narration that has been raised and attributed to the Prophet by Ibn 'Umar: "Whoever reveres themselves or struts arrogantly will meet Allāh whilst He is angry with him."

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[1] 5/254 [22186]. Also collected by At-Ṭabarānī in al-Kabīr 8/222 [7779].

[2] 1/326 [3008].

[3] 2/118 [5995]. Also collected by al-Bukhārī in al-Adab al-Mufrad [549].

Al-Bukhārī and Muslim[1] have both collected a narration in their *Ṣaḥīḥs* on the authority of Ibn 'Umar who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Indeed, the picture makers shall be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them: 'Give life to what you have created.'"

Also collected in the Ṣaḥīḥs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim[2] on the authority of Ibn 'Umar who reported that the Prophet said: "When any one of you dies, he is exposed to his place [in the Hereafter] in the morning and evening. If he is amongst the residents of Paradise, [he is shown the seat] from amongst the residents of Paradise, and if he is one from amongst the occupants of Hell [he is shown the seat] from amongst the occupants of Hell, and it would be said to him: 'That is your place, until Allāh raises you on the Day of Resurrection [and sends you to it].'"

Also in the two Ṣaḥīḥs[3] on the authority of Ibn 'Umar who reported that the Prophet said: "When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, and the people of the Hellfire enter the Hellfire, a caller will rise and make an announcement among them, 'O people of Paradise! Eternity without death. O' the people of the Hellfire! Eternity without death!' Thus, the people of Paradise will rejoice even more than they are rejoicing and the people of the Hellfire shall feel more sorrow than they are feeling already."

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Transactions, Chapter: Trading with clothing that is disliked for males and females [2105] and in other places. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Clothing, Chapter: The prohibition in making a picture of an animal [2108].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Funerals, Chapter: The deceased is shown his place in the Hereafter in the morning and evening [1379]. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Paradise, Chapter: Showing the deceased their place in paradise or hell [2866].

[3] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter: The Description of Paradise and Hell [6548]. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Paradise, Chapter: The Tyrants Shall Enter the Fire [2850].

In the *Musnad*[1] of al-Imām Aḥmad on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, he said: "Whoever purchases a garment for as little as ten *dirhams* and one of those *dirhams* has been earned unlawfully, Allāh will not accept his prayers as long as he has it." He then placed his fingers in his ears and said: "May I be deafened if I had not heard it directly from the Prophet."

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] is a narration on the authority of Abdullah bin Amr who narrated from the Prophet: "Whoever abandons the prayer once due to intoxication, it is as if he possessed the world and let it escape from him. And whoever abandons the prayer four times, Allāh would make it His right that he makes them drink from *Tinat al-Khabal*." It was said: "What is *Tinat al-Khabal* O' Messenger of Allāh ﷺ?" He said: "It is the liquid discharge of the people of the Hellfire.

Also, al-Imām Aḥmad[3] collected a narration that has been attributed to the Prophet on the authority of Abdullah bin Amr: "Whoever takes one drink of an intoxicant, Allāh shall not accept his prayers for forty days, but if he repents, Allāh will accept his repentance. However, if he re-offends, Allāh will not accept his prayers for forty days and if he repents, Allāh will accept his repentance. I am unsure whether he said it on the third or fourth occasion, he said: If they re-offend again, Allāh would make it His right that he makes him drink from *Tinat al-Khabal* on the Day of Resurrection."

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[1] 2/98 [5732].

[2] 2/178 [6659].

[3] 2/176 [6644]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [3377] and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* [5357].

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Abū Musa who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'Whoever dies whilst addicted to intoxicants, Allāh will make him drink from the river of *Ghuta.*' It was said: 'What is the river of *Ghuta?*' He replied: 'A river that flows out of the private parts of the lewd women of Hellfire, the people of the Hellfire are harmed from the stench of their private parts.'"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] on the authority of Abū Musa who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'The people will be presented before Allāh three times on the Day of Resurrection. The first two times will be for disputes and excuses, and the third time will be when the scrolls of deeds fly into their hands, some will take it in the right hand and some in the left.'"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[3] on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'Beware of the sins that people deem insignificant, for indeed they accumulate against an individual until they destroy him.' The Messenger of Allāhﷺ struck a parable. It was of a group of people who found themselves in a barren land before they eventually found food. So one of the men would go and fetch wood and return with it, and another man would do the same until they gathered a vast amount and kindled their fire, then they cooked their food."

In the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī[4] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'A bridge will be laid over the Hellfire. I will be the first to cross it. And the invocation of the Messengers on that Day, will be 'Allāhumma Sallim, Sallim' (O Allāh, save us, save us!), and over that bridge there will be hooks similar to the thorns of As-Sa'dan (a thorny tree). These hooks will snatch the people according to their deeds. Some people will be ruined because of their evil deeds, and some will be cut into pieces and fall down in Hell but will be saved afterwards when Allāh has finished the judgments among His slaves and intends to take out of the Fire whoever He wishes to take out from among those who used to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh. We will order the Angels to take them out and the angels will know them by the traces of the mark of prostration (on their foreheads) for Allāh banned the Fire from consuming the traces of prostration on the body of Adam's son. So they will take them out, and by then they would have burnt (as coal), and then water, called *Ma'ul Hayat* (water of life) will be poured on them, and they will spring out like a seed springs out on the bank of a rainwater stream.'"

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[1] 4/399 [19569].

[2] 4/414 [19715]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4277].

[3] 1/402-403 [3818].

[4] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter: The *Sirat* Is a Bridge Over the Hellfire. Also collected in Muslim in the Book of Faith [182].

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim[1] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say: 'The first to be judged on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who had died as a martyr. He will be brought forward. Allāh will remind him of the favors He had bestowed upon him and the man will acknowledge them. Then He will ask him: 'What did you do to express gratitude for it?' The man will reply: 'I fought for Your Cause till I was martyred.' Allāh will say: 'You have lied. You fought so that people might call you courageous; and they have done so.' A command will then be issued about him and he will be dragged on his face and thrown into Hell. Next, a man who had acquired and imparted knowledge and read the Qur'an will be brought forward, Allāh will remind him of the favors He had bestowed upon him and the man will acknowledge them. Then He will ask him: 'What did you do to express gratitude for it?' The man will reply: 'I acquired knowledge and taught it and read the Qur'an for Your sake.' Allāh will say to him: 'You have lied. You acquired knowledge so that people might call you a learned, and you read the Qur'an so that they might call you a reciter, and they have done so.' A command will then be issued about him, and he will be dragged on his face and thrown into Hell. Next, a man whom Allāh had made affluent and to whom Allāh had given all the various forms of wealth will be brought forward, Allāh will remind him of the favors He had bestowed upon him and the man will acknowledge them. He will ask him: 'What did you do to express gratitude for it?' The man will reply: 'I did not neglect any of the ways You liked wealth to be spent for Your sake except that I gave wealth in.' Allāh will say to him: 'You have lied. You did it so that people might call you generous, and they have done so.' A command will then be issued about him and he will be dragged on his face and thrown into Hell.'"

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[1] Collected by Muslim in the Book of Leadership, Chapter: Those who fight to show off or be known deserve the Hellfire [1905].

In another wording it states: 'These are the first amongst the creation of Allāh to be cast into the Fire on the Day of Resurrection[1]."

I heard Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah say: "Just as the best of creation are the Prophets, the worst of them are those who feign their resemblance from the liars and claim to be them when they actually are not. In fact, the best people after the Prophets are the scholars, the martyrs, those who spend in charity for the sake of Allāh and the sincere ones, whilst the worst of people are those who resemble them and give the illusion that they are them, when they actually are not."

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī in the Chapters of Worldly Abstinence, Chapter of Showing Off and Being Known. *Tuḥfat Aḥwadhī* [7/46].

Al-Bukhārī collects a narration in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[1] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who narrated that the Prophet said: "Whoever has wronged his brother in his wealth or his honor, then he should approach him to seek his pardon before it is taken from him when he doesn't own any *Dinar* nor *Dirham*. Then if he has any rewards, it will be taken from his rewards, and if he doesn't have any rewards, some of his brother's bad deeds will be levied upon him and then he shall be cast into the fire."

Also in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[2] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who narrated that the Prophet said: "He who unjustly took a span of land would be made to wear around his neck seven earths."

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim[3] on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: 'The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'This fire of yours which the sons of Adam burn is only one-seventieth part of the Fire of Hell.' His Companions said: 'By Allāh, even ordinary fire would have been hot enough.' Thereupon he said: 'It is sixty-nine parts in excess of the heat of the fire in this world, each of them being equivalent to its heat.'"

Al-Imām Aḥmad[4] collects a narration on the authority of Mu'ath who said: "Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, advise me." So he replied: "Do not associate anything in partnership with Allāh, even if you are burnt or killed. Do not be undutiful to your parents, even if the both command you to leave your family and wealth. Never purposely abandon an obligatory prayer, as the one who intentionally abandons a prescribed prayer will be stripped of the protection of Allāh. Do not drink alcohol, as it is the origin of all immorality. Beware of all sin, because sins earn the wrath of Allāh."

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[1] Collected in the Book of Injustices, Chapter: Whoever Has an Injustice [2449]

[2] Collected in this particular wording on the authority of Ibn 'Umar in the Book of Injustices [2454] and in the Book of the Beginning of Creation [3196]. The narration by Abū Hurairah has been recorded by Muslim [1611].

[3] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of the Beginning of Creation, Chapter: The Description of the Hellfire [3265]. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Paradise, Chapter: The Severity of the Heat of the Hellfire [2843].

[4] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 5/238 [22075].

Moreover, there are a multitude of narrations in this topic that we have not cited. Thus, the one who self-counsels should not turn a blind eye to them and indulge in sins whilst clinging onto the excuse of hope and good thoughts erroneously.

Abū al-Wafa' bin 'Aqīl said: "Be cautious from His punishment and do not become deceived, for the hand is cut for the theft of something worth a mere three *dirhams,* and the lashes are issued for the consumption of a small amount of alcohol, a woman entered the Hellfire on account of a cat that she mistreated, and a garment of clothing had become fire for the one who unlawfully took it from the spoils of war, even though he was murdered by enemy combatants."

Al-Imām Aḥmad[1] said: "I was informed by Abū Mu'āwīyah who said I was informed by al-A'mash on the authority of Sulayman bin Maysarah who narrated a narration from Tariq bin Hishab that is attributed to the Prophet. "He said: 'A man entered Paradise at the expense of a fly, and a man entered the Hellfire at the expense of a fly.' They said: 'How is that, O' Messenger of Allāh ﷺ?' He said: 'Two men passed by a group of people who had an idol that they worshipped besides Allāh. Nobody was allowed to pass by it unless they offered a sacrifice for it. So it was said to one of the men, 'Sacrifice something.' He replied, 'I do not have anything to sacrifice.' They said to him, 'Sacrifice something even if it is a fly.' So he sacrificed the fly and they allowed him to pass and consequently entered the Hellfire. They said to the other man, 'Sacrifice something.' But he replied, 'I will not sacrifice anything to other than Allāh.' So they struck his neck and he consequently entered Paradise.'"

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[1] Collected in Az-Zuhd [83].

A servant can be cast into the Hellfire at a distance spanning the distance between the east and the west for a careless word he uttered.

Deceived by the Favors That Allāh Has Afforded You in the Worldly Life

Perhaps, some of those who have been deceived have relied on the blessings that Allāh has bestowed upon them in this life thinking that they will not be a cause for change in him, whilst believing that he has been awarded such things due to Allāh's love for him and that he shall be awarded something even better in the Hereafter. Undoubtedly, this is a form of delusion.

Al-Imām Aḥmad[1] said: I was informed by Yahya bin Ghaylan who said, I was informed by Rishdayn bin Sa'd on the authority of Harmalah bin 'Imrān, narrated on the authority of ‘‘Uqbah bin Muslim who narrated on the authority of ‘‘Uqbah bin ‘Amir who narrated that the Prophet said: "If you see that Allāh is giving His favors to a person in this life whilst they are indulging in sins, know it is an allurement." He then recited the statement of Allāh:

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا۟ مَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَٰبَ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَرِحُوا۟ بِمَآ أُوتُوٓا۟ أَخَذْنَٰهُم بَغْتَةً
فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

"So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every good thing until, when they rejoiced from that which they were given, We seized them suddenly and they were in despair." [al-An'ām:44]

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[1] Collected in the Musnad 4/145 [17311] and in Az-Zuhd [62].

Some of the Pious Predecessors would say: "If you see that Allāh successively gives you His favors whilst you delve yourself into sins, then beware, for indeed it is an allurement that He allures you with."

Allāh The Most High said:

وَلَوْلَآ أَن يَكُونَ ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقُفًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ
وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَٰبًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِـُٔونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَزُخْرُفًا ۚ وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا
مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

"And if it were not that the people would become one nation, We would have made for those who disbelieve in *Ar-Rahman* – for their houses – ceilings and stairways of silver upon which to mount. And for their houses, doors and couches of silver upon which to recline. And gold ornament, but all that is nothing but the enjoyment of the worldly life. And the Hereafter with your Lord is for the righteous." [Az-Zukhruf:33-35]

Allāh has also rebuked the notion of those who hold the belief that a bestowment of blessings upon them is a sign of His love, He says:

فَأَمَّا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِذَا مَا ٱبْتَلَىٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَأَكْرَمَهُۥ وَنَعَّمَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّىٓ أَكْرَمَنِ ﴿١٥﴾ وَأَمَّآ إِذَا مَا ٱبْتَلَىٰهُ
فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّىٓ أَهَٰنَنِ ﴿١٦﴾ كَلَّا ۖ ﴿١٧﴾

"As for man, when His Lord tries him and is generous to him and favors him, he says: 'My Lord has honored me.' But when He tries him and restricts his provisions, he says: 'My Lord has humiliated me.' Nay." [al-Fajr:15-17]

In meaning, not everyone who receives abundant blessings and vast luxuries in this life has been honored, and not everyone whom I have constricted their provisions has been humiliated by Me. I trial this person through the blessings and honor the other through an affliction.

A narration has been attributed to At-Tirmidhī in his collection stating that the Prophet said: "Indeed, Allāh affords the worldly life to those whom He loves and those whom He does not love. But He only bestows faith to the one He loves."

Some of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) would say: "There could be those who are deluded by the blessings of Allāh upon him whilst he is unaware, and there could be those who are deluded from the concealment that Allāh affords them of their sins whilst they are unaware, and there could be one who has been trialed by the praise of the people for him whilst he is unaware."

The Most Deluded Ones Are Those Who Have Been Deceived by this Worldly Life and its Instant Riches

The most deluded creature is the one who is deceived by this worldly life and its instant pleasures, valuing it over the Hereafter and being content with it. To the extent that some of them say: "This world is an instant form of money, but the Hereafter is delayed credit, and instant money it better than credit!"

Others say: "A seed that is instant is better than a pearl that has been promised."

Another individual said: "The pleasures of this life are guaranteed, whereas the pleasure of the Hereafter are in doubt and I will not forsake certainty for doubt."

This is from the most powerful forms of the Devil's deception and enticement. The barbaric beasts are more astute than these individuals since the beast does not advance towards anything if it fears harm from it, even if it is beaten to do so. However, the likes of those mentioned above will encroach towards their own destruction, whilst they are either truthful about it or in denial. As for this category of people, if one of them were believe in Allāh, His Messenger, meeting Allāh and the final judgment, then he will experience the greatest despair because he has embarked on this upon knowledge. On the other hand, if he does not believe in Allāh and His Messenger, then he is even further astray.

As for the statement of the one who says, "instant money is better than credit," the response to it is as follows: If the instant money is equivalent to the delayed credit, then the money is better. However, if they differ in value and the delayed credit is more than the instant money, then the credit is better. So then what would be the case since the entire worldly life from its beginning to end is like one breath from the breaths of the Hereafter! As has been reported in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad and At-Tirmidhī[1] on the authority of al-Mustawrid bin Shaddad who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'The worldly life in comparison to the Hereafter is similar to the amount of water one gets when he puts his finger in the sea. Let him then see what it returns with.'" So preferring this instant money over the delayed payment is from the most striking forms of deception and most shameful types of ignorance. Now if this comparison is of this entire life, what is the value of a person's life in comparison to the Hereafter? Which one is more commendable for the astute person: Valuing this instant life during this short span of time and being prevented from the eternal good in the Hereafter or leaving something pathetic and insignificant that will soon come to and end to eventually receive something precious, incomparable, enumerable and eternal.

As for the statement of the other one, "I will not forsake certainty for doubt," it should be said to him: Either you are in doubt about the promise and threat of Allāh and the honesty of His Prophets, or you are assured of all of that. If you are sure of it, then you would only have left a small seed that is soon to cease and disappear in exchange for something wherein there is no doubt or end.

If you are in doubt, review the signs of Allāh that prove His existence, His ability, Will, Oneness and the honesty of His Messenger in everything they have conveyed about Him. Be fair and analytical until it becomes unequivocally clear to you that the message brought by the Messengers from Allāh is the indisputable truth, and that the Creator of the universe is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and Who is perfectly exalted, sanctified and freed from anything that opposes what His Messengers informed and conveyed. Whoever attributes any other information to Him has insulted Him, opposed Him and denied His Lordship and Sovereignty. As it is from the absolute impossibilities that anyone with a sound natural inclination can deem that the True and Sovereign King is incapable in any capacity, ignorant, unknowing, unable to hear, cannot see, does not speak, nor command, nor prohibit, nor recompense, nor give honor and disgrace to whom He wills, or is unable to send His Messengers across the breadth of His kingdom, or have concern for His subjects and instead leave them in idleness and disregard.

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[1] Collected by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* [2858]. Also collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 4/229 [18008]. Also collected by At-Tirmidhī [2322].

Such a state would be an impairment in any king from the human form and something unbefitting to their majesty, so how could it ever be permissible in relation to the Supreme and True King?!

If one contemplates on his own condition from the beginning of his formation as a drop of semen until he attains full strength, it will become evident to him that it could never be befitting for the One Who took care of him, transformed him to the state he is in and advanced you through these stages to leave him in disregard, or neglect, or without command or prohibit or grant him the knowledge of His rights or recompense him.

Moreover, if one truly contemplates, everything that you see or do not see will be evidence of His Oneness, the prophecies, the Hereafter and that the Qur'ān is His Word. We have already mentioned the angles of deriving the evidences for this in the book *'Ayman al-Qur'ān'* in explanation of the verse:

فَلَآ أُقۡسِمُ بِمَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَمَا لَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّهُۥ لَقَوۡلُ رَسُولٖ كَرِيمٖ ﴿٤٠﴾

"So I swear by what you see. And what you do not see. That indeed the Qur'ān is the word of a noble Messenger." [al-Haqah:38-40]

He also mentioned a piece of this evidence in His statement:

وَفِيٓ أَنفُسِكُمۡۚ أَفَلَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

"And in your own selves, do you not see." [Adh-Dhariyat:21]

The human is evidence for his own self in proving the existence of his Creator and His Oneness, the honesty of His Messengers and an affirmation of His Perfect Attributes.

Thus, is has become clear that the deceived one is wrong from both perspectives: The perspective of his affirmation and certitude and the perspective of his denial and doubt.

If one were to say: How can resolute conviction that does not contain any doubt about the Hereafter or Paradise or Hellfire be harmonized with an absence of actions? And is it from human nature to know that one is requested to stand before a king tomorrow so that he may chastise him in the most severe way or honor him to the upmost degree, yet he spends his nights heedless, forgetting his standing before the King, without preparing for it or being alert? It would be said –by Allāh- this is a good question that relates to most of the creation, whilst combining both these contradictions is from the strangest of things.

This absence of good actions has numerous reasons:

One of them is a weakness in knowledge and a deficiency in certitude, and whoever believes that knowledge does not vary has made an erroneous and false statement of great proportions. Prophet Ibrahim asked his Lord to show him how He brings life to the dead although he knew that the Lord was capable in doing so. However, it was to gain an increase in certitude and for the unseen matter to become something that was witnessed.

Al-Imām Aḥmad collects a narration in his *Musnad*[1]: The Prophet said: "Obtaining information is not like witnessing."

If a weakness in knowledge is combined with an inability to recollect it at necessary times and an absence in the heart most of the time due to a preoccupation with its counteractive actions, and all this is consolidated with the influence of ones character, the dominance of whims, overwhelming desires, an enticement of the soul, the devils deception, misinterpreted concessions and general habits - if it reaches this stage, none other than the One who holds the heavens and the earth from falling can solidify the faith in a person. Due to this, faith is at contrasting levels within a person until it reaches the size of the most miniscule seed within the heart.

All if these reasons originate from a weakness in insight and patience. Thus, Allāh praised the people who possess patience and certitude and made them leaders in the religion:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

"And We made from among them leaders guiding by Our Command when they were patient and they were certain of Our signs." [As-Sajda:24]

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[1] 1/215, 271 [1832, 2447].

The Difference Between Good Thoughts and Delusion

The difference between good thoughts and delusion has been previously explained. It is that if the good thoughts motivate one to do good actions, encourage an individual to do them and lead a person to them, then it is sound and good. But if these same thoughts lead a person to idleness and a devotion to sins, then it is in fact deception.

Having good thoughts is also the correct method of hope. So whoever's hope attracts them to obedience and deters them from sin, then it is the correct hope. However, whoever has confused the two and made his lack of good actions to be a form of hope to the extent his hope amounts to nothing more than idleness and neglect, then he is deluded.

If a man owned a plot of land that he hoped would one day produce crops that would benefit him, yet he neglects it, fails to plant it or cultivate it but anticipates that it will become as cultivated as one who takes care of their land, plants the seeds, irrigates it and takes care of it, the people would deem him to be of the most feebleminded individuals.

Likewise, similar examples would be if one were to have good thoughts and strengthen their hope to conceive a child without performing sexual intercourse, or to become the most knowledgeable of his generation without seeking knowledge and a complete focus on it; and the examples are numerous.

Similarly, the one who betters their thoughts and strengthens their hope in achieving the loftiest levels in the Hereafter and the everlasting bounties without any obedience or devotion to Allāh by implementing His commands and avoiding His prohibitions.

Allāh is the One Who grants success.

Allāh said:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ٢١٨

"Indeed, those who have believed and those who have emigrated and fought in the cause of Allāh – those hope for the Mercy of Allāh. And Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful." [al-Baqarah:218]

Reflect on the point here that Allāh deemed their hope to be their fulfillment of these actions mentioned in the verse. Yet the deluded ones insist on saying: The neglectful and wasteful ones of the rights of Allāh, those who fail to actualize His commands, terrorize His servants and the audacious in His prohibitions are the ones who hope for the Mercy of Allāh.

The defining subtlety in this matter is that hope and good thoughts are fulfilled through the appropriate means that have been set by the Perfect Wisdom of Allāh in His legislation, capability, recompense and generosity. One must firstly implement them and also have good thoughts about his Lord, direct his hope to Him that He does not allow him to depend on his own self and to make these actions something that will allow him to attain that which benefits him and diverts all else as well as extinguish any remnants of it.

The Obligation of Hope

It must be known that the one who hopes in something must also maintain a number of things in his hope:

One: The love of whatever he hopes for.

Two: A fear of it escaping from him.

Three: An endeavor to attain it according to their capability. As for the type of hope that does not contain any of the above, it is considered a fake aspiration! Hope is one thing, and fake aspirations are another. Everyone who has hope is also in fear, and if the one who is journeying on a path is struck by fear, he begins to travel at a faster pace in the fear that some assistance will pass him by.

In At-Tirmidhī[1], he collects a narration on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Whoever fears shall hasten, and whoever hastens shall reach their destination. Indeed, the merchandise of Allāh is valuable, the merchandise of Allāh is Paradise.'" Just as Allāh has declared that the correct hope pertains to those who perform good actions, He likewise attributes the feeling of fear to them as well. Through this is known that beneficial hope and fear is the type that is coupled with righteous deeds. Allāh said:

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[1] [2450]. Also collected by al-Bukhārī in At-Tarīkh [2/111].

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ هُم مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِم مُّشْفِقُونَ ۝٥٧ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝٥٨ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِرَبِّهِمْ
لَا يُشْرِكُونَ ۝٥٩ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَآ ءَاتَوا۟ وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَٰجِعُونَ ۝٦٠ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُسَٰرِعُونَ
فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَٰبِقُونَ ۝٦١

"Indeed, they are those who are worried from the fear of their Lord. And they who believe in the signs of their Lord. And they who do not associate anything with their Lord. And they give what they give whilst their hearts are fearful because they will be returning to their Lord – it is those who hasten to do good deeds, and they outdo others therein." [al-Mu'minūn:57-61]

At-Tirmidhī[1] collected a narration on the authority of 'Aisha who said: "I asked the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ about this verse." She said: "Are they those who drink intoxicants and steal?" He said: "No, O daughter of As-Siddiq. They are those who fast, perform the prayers, give charity while they fear that their Lord will not accept it from them. It is these who hasten to do good deeds, and they are the foremost of them." This narration has also been recorded on the authority of Abū Hurairah.

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[1] [3175]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4198] and al-Imām Aḥmad 6/159 [25263].

Utmost Performance of Good Deeds Alongside Utmost Fear

Allāh has described the people of bliss and goodness with the attribute of fear and attributed wretchedness and misdeeds with having a false sense of security. Whoever reflects on the condition of the Companions will find that they managed to reach the ultimate level in their righteous deeds and combine it with utmost fear. As for us, we have combined our shortcomings –rather, a state of negligence- alongside a false sense of security!

Here you have As-Siddiq (Abū Bakr As-Siddiq) who said: "I wish I were a mere hair on the body of a believing servant[1]."

It has also been mentioned that he would grab a hold of his tongue and then say, "This has doomed me!"[2]

He would also weep frequently and say: "Weep for yourselves! If you cannot weep, then try hard to do so!"[3] When he rose for prayer, he would be as still as a plank of wood from the fear he had of Allāh[4].

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [559].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [561].

[3] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [558].

[4] Collected by Abdur-Razaq in al-Musanaf [2/264].

On one occasion a bird was brought to him, so he began to examine it, then he said: "It was not hunted or brought down from a tree except as a recompense for whatever it neglected from glorification of the Lord."[1]

When he was in the final moments of his life, he said to [his daughter] 'Aisha: "My daughter, I gained this cloak and this bucket and this servant from the treasury of the Muslims [which he was entitled to], so hasten with them and hand them to [Umar] Ibn al-Khattab."[2]

It was also narrated that he said: "I would love to have been this tree to be chewed and eaten up!"[3]

Qatada said: "It has reached me that Abū Bakr said: 'I would like to have been a plant that was eaten by the livestock.'"[4]

And here we see the condition of Umar bin al-Khattab. On one occasion he recited the chapter of *At-Tur* until he reached the verse:

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَٰقِعٌ۝٧

"Indeed, the punishment of your Lord will come to pass." [At-Tur:7]

It caused him to weep, and his weeping became so severe that he fell ill, and people began to visit him due to his illness. As he was in his final moments, he addressed his son and said: "Woe to you! Place my cheek on the floor, perhaps Allāh will forgive me." He then said: "I have lost out if Allāh does not forgive me." He repeated this three times before passing. He would recite his daily portion of Qur'ān through the night sometimes and pass by a particular verse and it would affect him, so he would remain in his house for days until the people would visit him because they thought he was ill. He had two visible black lines under his eyes from the effects of crying.

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [566].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [567].

[3] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [580].

[4] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [582].

Ibn 'Abbas once said to him: "Allāh allowed you to enter lands and conquer different countries." He replied: "I only wish to be saved without anything held against me."

As for Uthman bin 'Affan: If he stood at a gravesite, he would weep until he wet his beard[1]. He also said: "If I were in a place between Paradise and the Hellfire, not knowing where I would be ordered to go, I would choose to be dust before I know where I will end up."[2]

Here we see the condition of Ali bin Abi Talib and his weeping and fear of Allāh. His apprehension would intensify from two things. The hope of lasting in this life, valuing it over the Hereafter and following the soul's desires. He said: "As for the first, it makes you forget the Hereafter, and as for following one's desires, it obstructs from accepting the truth. Indeed, this life is retreating and the Hereafter is approaching, each of them have children, so be from the children of the Hereafter and do not be from the children of this world. For today there is opportunity for action without reckoning, and tomorrow there will be a reckoning without any opportunity for action."[3]

Here we have Abū Ad-Darda' who used to say: "The thing I fear the most from the Day of Resurrection is for it to be said to me: O' Abū Ad-

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[1] Collected in At-Tirmidhī [2308. Ibn Mājah [4267]. Imām Aḥmad 1/63-64 [454]. al-Hakim 4/366-367 [7942].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [685].

[3] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [692]. Also collected by Abū Dāwūd in Az-Zuhd [113].

Darda', you have come to know, so what have you done with what you know?"[1] He would also say: "If you knew what you are facing after death, you would never eat with an appetite, nor would you drink anything with an appetite, you would not have entered your homes to seek shade and you would have gone out to the vast open plains beating your chests and weeping over your sins. I wish I were a tree that was chewed up and eaten."[2]

Under the eyes of Abdullah bin 'Abbas resembled decrepit shoelaces from the effect of tears[3].

Abū Thar would say: "I wish I were a tree that was chewed up, and I wish I was not created."[4]

Charity was presented to him but he would say: "We have a goat that we milk, donkeys to transport things on, a servant to serve us and enough garments, and I already fear the reckoning for these things."[5]

One night, Tamim Ad-Dari recited the chapter of *al-Jāthiyah.* When he reached the verse:

أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱجْتَرَحُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ ﴿٢١﴾

"Do they who perpetrate evil deeds think that We shall hold them equal with those who believe and do righteous good deeds," [al-Jathiyah:21]

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [730].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [730].

[3] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [873].

[4] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [787].

[5] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [786]. Also collected by Abū Nu'aym in al-Hilya [1/163].

He continued to repeat it and weep until the morning.[1]

Abū 'Ubaydah bin al-Jarah said: "I wish I were a sheep to be slaughtered by my family and eaten."[2] Gathering the narrations in this topic would become something considerably lengthy.

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[1] Collected by Ibn Mubarak in Az-Zuhd [31]. Waki' in Az-Zuhd [150] and Abū Dāwūd in Az-Zuhd [394].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [1025].

The Fear of the Companions From Falling Into Hypocrisy

Al-Bukhārī has recorded a chapter in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[1]: "Chapter: The fear that the believer has from his actions being null whilst he is unaware." Ibrahim At-Taymi said: "Every time I measure my speech against my actions I fear that I am from the dishonest."[2] Ibn Abi Mulaykah: "I met thirty men from the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, all of them feared falling into hypocrisy. None of them would say that their faith is as complete as the faith of Angel(s) Jibrīl and Mikāʾīl."[3] It has also been reported from al-Hassan to have said: "Nobody but a believer fears it [hypocrisy], and nobody but a hypocrite feels safe from it."

Umar bin al-Khattab would say to Ḥudhayfah: "I place an oath on you by Allāh, did the Messenger of Allāhﷺ mention me to you [among the list of hypocrites]?" Ḥudhayfah would reply: "No, and I shall not vindicate anyone after you."

I heard our Shaykh [Ibn Taymīyah] say: "His intent here is not that there are not others who have been freed from hypocrisy; rather, I will not give everyone the opportunity to ask me the question of: 'Did the Prophet name me to you?'"

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[1] The Book of Faith

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in his Tarikh [1/335] and al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [2215].

[3] Collected by al-Bukhārī in his Tarikh [5/137]

This example resembles the response that the Prophet gave the man who asked him whether he was from the seventy thousand among his nation that will enter Paradise without reckoning: "You have been preceded by 'Ukasha."[1] He did not intend that Ukasha would be alone in this regard amongst his Companions. However, had the Prophet supplicated for the other man as well, many others would have risen to ask the same question and there may be an individual who would ask but is undeserving of being among them. Thus, it was better to initially withhold from presenting this opportunity. Allāh knows best.

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[1] Refer to al-Bukhārī in The Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter: Seventy Thousand Will Enter Paradise Without Reckoning [6542]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith, Chapter: The Evidence That Groups of Muslims Shall Enter Paradise Without a Reckoning or Punishment [216].

Recommencing to the Cure for the Illness

Let us return to mention the cure to this illness, which if continues shall ruin the worldly affairs and the Hereafter of a servant. It must be known that sins are an inevitable harm, and their harms on the heart is like the harm that poison poses on the body at its various intensities. Now, is there any evil in this life or the next except that the reason for it is sins and disobedience?

What is it that caused Adam and Ḥawā to be expelled from Paradise, the abode of delight, bliss and joy to the abode of pains, sorrow and calamities? What is it that caused Iblis (Satan) to be expelled from the gatherings of the heavens and receiving the curse, transforming him to the most despicable of creation and making his inner self more heinous than his outer appearance? Ousted from a state of nearness to banishment, from mercy to accursed, beauty to hideousness, from Paradise to Hell, faith to disbelief, being a close ally to a disputant and an enemy, from performing *tasbīh* glorifying the Lord to disbelief and polytheism and lying and fraud and immorality, and from being immersed in faith to being immersed in disbelief, corruption and disobedience. Thus, he became insignificant to Allāh and became debased. Allāh became angry with him, so He banished him. Henceforth, he became a leader to every immoral person and criminal who is pleased with him as a leader, all after the initial state of worship and honor. We seek refuge in You –O' Allāh- from ever opposing Your Command and partaking in Your prohibitions.

What is it that caused the people in the land to drown beneath the waters that rose above the mountaintops?

What is it that caused the wind to overwhelm the people of 'Ad until they all lay dead on the earth as if they were hollow date palm tree trunks, destroying everything in its path from their homes, their crops and their livestock until they became an example for every nation that succeeded them until the Day of Resurrection?

What is it that caused the awful cry to overcome the people of Thamud until it tore apart their hearts inside their bodies and they all died?

What is it that caused the towns of the homosexuals to be lifted up into the sky, until the Angels heard the barking of their dogs before being turned upside down making its higher part the lowest, destroying them all? After that, they were pelted with stones from the heavens. Their punishment combined that which was not combined in any other punishment to any other nation. Their counterparts will receive a similar fate and it is ever so near to the wrongdoers.

What is it that caused the dark clouds to be sent over the people of Shu'ayb before they settled above their heads and fire rained from the sky?

What is it that caused the Pharoah and his people to drown in the sea before their souls were cast into the fire? Their bodies were drowned whilst their souls were burnt.

What was it that caused Qarun, his home, his wealth and his family to be swallowed by the earth?

What is it that caused the generation after Noah to be afflicted with various punishments and be completely destroyed?

What is it that caused the people mentioned in Yã Sĩn to be doomed with an awful cry, completely destroying them all?

What is it that caused a mighty people to be sent to the children of Isrā'īl probing every home, seizing the people of the town and imprisoning their women and children, burning the homes and looting the wealth? Then they were sent a second time and they inflicted further destruction and took over with complete destruction. What is it that brought about various punishments? At times through death or imprisonment or a destruction of the land or the oppression of a ruler, and on another occasion by transforming them into apes and pigs, all concluded with an oath that Allāh made:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكَ لَيَبْعَثَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَن يَسُومُهُمْ سُوٓءَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۗ ﴿١٦٧﴾

"And mention when your Lord declared that He would surely send upon them until the Day of Resurrection those who would afflict them with the worst torment." [al-Aʿrāf:167]

Some Narrations Regarding the Types of Punishments That Befell Individuals and Nations in This Life Due to Their Sins

Al-Imām Aḥmad said[1]: "We were informed by al-Walid bin Muslim who said, we were informed by Safwan bin Amr who said, we were informed by Abdu-Rahman bin Jubayr bin Nafir who reported that his father said: 'When Cyprus was conquered, its people became dispersed from one another and they began to cry for one another. I saw Abū Ad-Darda' sitting alone and weeping, so I said to him: 'O' Abū Ad-Darda', what makes you cry on a day that Allāh made Islām and the Muslims victorious in?' He replied: 'Woe to you Jubayr, how insignificant is the creation to Allāh once they squander their command! At one time they were a powerful and commanding nation that possessed sovereignty, but they left the command of Allāh and they became what you see today.'"

Ali bin al-Ja'd said[2]: "We were informed by Shu'bah who narrated that 'Amr bin Murra said: I heard Abū al-Bakhtari say: I was informed by someone who heard the Prophet say: 'The people will not perish until their sins and faults become abundant.'"

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[1] Collected in Az-Zuhd [762].

[2] This narration has been collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in his Musnad 4/260 18289, Abū Dāwūd [4347] and others.

Also in the Musnad of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] is a narration on the authority of Umm Salamah who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allāhﷺ say: 'If sins become prevalent in my nation, Allāh will engulf them all with a punishment from Him.' So I said: 'O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, will there not be any righteous people amongst them on that day?' He replied: 'In fact there will be.' So I asked: 'How will they be dealt with?' He said: 'They will be afflicted by the same thing that afflicted the rest of the people, and they will receive the forgiveness of Allāh and His pleasure.'"

In a *Mursal* narration of al-Hassan who narrates that the Prophet said: "This nation will not cease to be under the protection of Allāh as long as its scholars do not support its corrupt leaders in their corruption, and as long as its righteous ones do not commend its immoral ones and as long as its evil ones do not degrade its pious ones. If they do, Allāh will remove His protection from them and cause their tyrants to rule over them to inflict a terrible torment on them, then Allāh will strike them with neediness and poverty."[2]

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[3] on the authority of Thawban who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'Certainly, a man can be denied some provisions due to a sin he perpetrates.'"

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[4] on the authority of Thawban who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'The other nations will come to gather around you from every horizon just as hungry people gather around a dish of food.' We said: 'Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, is it because we will be few in number on that day?' He said: 'On that day, you will be in large numbers, but you will be like the foam of the torrent of the sea. The fear in the hearts of your enemies will be removed and *al-Wahn* will be placed in your hearts.' We asked: 'What is *al-Wahn?'* He said: 'A love for this life and a hatred of death.'"

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[1] 6/304 [26596].

[2] Collected by Ibnul Mubarak in Az-Zuhd [821].

[3] 37/68 [22386]. al-Hakim 1/670 [1814]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4022] and Ibn Ḥibbān [872].

[4] 5/278 [22397]

Also in *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Anas bin Malik who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'When I was taken up to heaven, I passed by people who had nails of copper and were scratching their faces and their chests. I said: Who are these people, Jibrīl? He replied: They are those who backbite the people and malign the people's honor.'"

At-Tirmidhī[2] reports a narration on the authority of Abū Hurairah who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'In the end of time, there shall come men who will swindle the world with religion, deceiving the people whilst cloaked in soft sheep skin appearing to be abstinent, their tongues are sweeter than sugar and their hearts are the hearts of wolves. Allāh says: 'Is it me you try to delude or is it against me whom you conspire? By Me, I swear to send upon these people and among them, a trial that leaves even the person of deliberation in a state of misperception.'"

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[3] reports on the authority of Ja'far bin Muhammad who reports from his father who reports from his grandfather who said: "Ali said: 'There will come a time when nothing from Islām remains except its name and nothing from the Qur'ān remains with the people except its lettering. The mosques on that day will be full, but the people will be devoid of guidance. Their scholars will be the most evil under the heavens, from them a trial will originate and to them it shall return.'"

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[1] 3/120 [12211]

[2] [2404].

[3] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [8].

He also mentioned on the authority of Samak bin Harb who narrates from Abdu-Rahman bin Abdullah bin Masʿūd who narrates that his father said: "If fornication and usury become prevalent in a township, Allāh grants permission for it to be destroyed."

From the *Mursal* narrations of al-Hasan: "If the people feign having knowledge, fail to do actions, profess a love for one another merely on their tongues, dislike each other from their hearts and break their ties of kinship, Allāh will curse them for that and make them deaf and blind."[1]

In the *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah[2] on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar bin al-Khattab who said: "I was the tenth member in a group of ten amongst those who emigrated from Mecca in the presence of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, when he turned to face us and said: 'O Muhajirun, there are five things with which you will be tested, and I seek refuge with Allāh lest you live to see them: Immorality never appears among a people to such an extent that they commit it openly except that plagues and diseases that were never known among their predecessors will spread among them. They do not cheat in weights and measures except that they will be stricken with famine, severe calamity and the oppression of their rulers. They do not withhold the Zakah of their wealth except that rain will be withheld from the sky, and were it not for the animals, no rain would fall on them. They do not break their covenant with Allāh and His Messenger, but Allāh will enable their enemies to overpower them and take some of what is in their hands. Unless their leaders rule according to the Book of Allāh and seek all good from that which Allāh has revealed, Allāh will cause them to fight one another."

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[1] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [10].

[2] [4019].

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad and the *Sunan* of Abū Dawud[1] on the authority of Amr bin Murra who narrates from Salim bin Abū Ja'ad who narrates from Abū Ubayda, who narrates from Abdullah bin Mas'ūd who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Those who came before you, if any of them were to commit a misdeed, another person would inadequately prohibit the perpetrator. Then he would meet him the next day, he would sit in his gathering and eat and drink with him. When it came to this, Allāh led their hearts into evil ways. Then he cursed them upon the tongue of their Prophet, Dawud and 'Isa, the son of Mary. This was due to their disobedience and transgression.

Then he continued: 'Nay, by The One Whose Hand my soul is in, you either enjoin good and forbid evil and catch hold of the criminal and persuade him to act justly and stick to the truth, or Allāh will strike your hearts against one another and will curse you as He had cursed them.'"

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[2] narrated from Ibrahim bin Amr As-San'ani who said: "Allāh revealed to Yusha' bin Nun: 'Indeed, I will destroy forty thousand good people from your nation, and sixty thousand of the bad ones.' He said: 'My Lord, these are the bad ones, but why the good ones?' He said: 'They never became angry for My sake, instead, they would gather to eat and drink with them.'"

Abū Umar bin Abd al-Bar narrates from Abū Hizzan[3] who said: "Allāh sent two Angels to a town with a mission to destroy it and those who dwell in it. There, they found a man who was praying in a mosque, so they said: 'Our Lord, there is your servant praying.' Allāh then said: 'Destroy the village including him, for his face has never become angry for My sake.'"

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 1/391 [3713]. At-Tirmidhī [3047]. Ibn Mājah [4006] and Abū Dāwūd [4336].

[2] Collected in al-'Uqubat [13]

3 Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [14]

al-Humaydi narrates from Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah who said: "We were informed by Sufyan bin Sa'īd who narrates from Muss'ar[1] that an Angel was commanded to destroy a village, so the Angel said: 'My Lord, in it is your servant, an avid worshiper.' So Allāh revealed to this Angel that he should begin with him, for his face has never shown any anger for My sake.

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[2] narrates from Wahb bin Munabih who said: "When Prophet Dawud fell into a sin, he said: 'My Lord, forgive me.' He said: 'I have forgiven you and placed its shame on the children of Isrā'īl.' Prophet Dawud said: 'My Lord, how? And You are The Most Wise, The Most Just and You never oppress anyone, I do the sin and ascribe its shame to someone else?' Allāh revealed to him: 'When you fell into the sin, they never endeavored to reject it.'"

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[3] narrates on the authority of Anas bin Malik who went to 'Aisha with another individual. The man said to 'Aisha: "Mother of the believers, inform us about the earthquake." She replied: "If they legitimize fornication, consume alcohol, use musical instruments, Allāh displays jealousy for the earth, so He tells it (tremble with them on it). If they repent and relinquish the sins, then it stops; otherwise, He would destroy it along with them." The man continued: "Mother of the believers, is it a punishment for them?" She said: "Rather, it is an admonition and a mercy to the believers, and an exemplary punishment and a display of displeasure to the disbelievers." Anas bin Malik then said: "I have never heard a narration after the death of the Messenger that made me happier than this narration."

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[1] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [16]

[2] Collected in al-'Uqubat [15]

[3] Collected in al-'Uqubat [17]

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[1] also narrates that the earth trembled in the era of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, so he placed his hand on it and said: "Be still, it isn't time for you yet." Then he turned to face his Companions and said: "Your Lord wants you to please Him, so please Him." Then the earth trembled in the era of Umar bin al-Khattabs's rulership, so he said: "This tremble is nothing other than a result of something you have innovated. By the One Whose Hand my soul is in, if it re-occurs, I will not dwell amongst you."

Ibn Abi-Ad-Dunya[2] mentions amongst the virtues of Umar ibn al-Khattab that the earth trembled in the time of Umar, so he stuck it with his hand and said: "What is the matter? What is the matter? If it were the Resurrection, it would inform us of its testimony. I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say: 'If the Day of Resurrection comes, there would not be a hands-span or an inch that would not speak.'"

Al-Imām Aḥmad[3] mentioned on the authority of Safiyah who said: "The Madinah trembled in the era under the rule of Umar, so he said: 'O People, what is this? How quick are you to innovate, if it reoccurs, I shall not dwell amongst you.'"

Ka'b said: "The earth quakes if sins are perpetrated on it and it shudders in fear of its Lord, Mighty and Majestic, when He sees it in that state."

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[1] Collected in al-'Uqubat [18]

[2] Collected in al-'Uqubat [19]

[3] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [20] and Ibn Abi Shayba in al-Musanaf 2/222 [8335].

Umar bin Abdul-Aziz wrote to the states under his reign: “To proceed, these tremors are things that Allāh reprimands the servants with. I have written to the various states that they should come out of their homes on such and such date, in such and such month, and whoever has a possession and is able, should give it in charity. Indeed, Allāh says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ۝١٤ وَذَكَرَ ٱسْمَ رَبِّهِۦ فَصَلَّىٰ ۝١٥

‘He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself. And mentions the name of his Lord and prays.’ [al-A’la:14,15]

And say as Prophet Adam said [as mentioned by Allāh]:

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَآ أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ۝٢٣

‘Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers.’ [al-Aʿrāf:23]

Say as Prophet Noah said:

وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِى وَتَرْحَمْنِىٓ أَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ۝٤٧

‘If you do not forgive me and have mercy on me, I shall be of the losers.’ [Hud:47]

Say as Prophet Yunus said:

لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنتَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ إِنِّى كُنتُ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ۝٨٧

‘There is no deity worthy of worship except You, elevated above any deficiency, indeed I have been of the wrongdoers.’ [al-Anbiya:87]”

Al-Imām Aḥmad said[1]: "We were informed by Aswad bin 'Amir who said, we were informed by Abū Bakr who said, we were informed by al-A'mash who narrates from 'Ata bin Abi Rabah who narrates from Ibn Umar who said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allāhﷺ say: 'If the people become miserly with the *dinar* and *dirham,* deal in usury, follow the cows tails [cling avidly to the worldly life, agriculture etc.] and abandon the fight in the cause of Allāh, Allāh will descend a calamity upon them and will not remove it until they return to their religion.'" Abū Dawud also collected this narration through an authentic (*hasan*) chain of transmission.

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[2] also mentioned a narration on the authority of Ibn Umar who said: "I witnessed a time wherein none of us were in more need of his own *dinar* and *dirham* than his brother. Indeed, I heard the Messenger of Allāhﷺ say: 'If the people become miserly with the *dinar* and the *dirham,* consume usury, leave off the fight in the cause of Allāh and follow the cows' tails [cling avidly to the worldly life, agriculture etc.], Allāh will cause a calamity to descend from the sky upon them, and he shall not uplift it until they return to their religion.'"

Al-Hasan said: "Indeed, a trial is nothing but a punishment from Allāh on the people."[3]

Some of the Prophets who were sent to the Children if Isrā'īl witnessed the way *Bukhtu Nassar (Nebuchadnezzar)*[4] was dealing with them, so they said: "It is due to what our own hands have earned. You have empowered someone who does not know You nor has mercy over us."[1] *Bukhtu Nassar (Nebuchadnezzar)* said to Prophet Daniel: "What is it that empowered me over your people?" He replied: "The magnitude of your errors and the oppression of my people on themselves."[2]

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[1] Collected in al-Musnad 2/28 [4825].

[2] Collected in al-Uqubat [24].

[3] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [24]

[4] A Persian pagan who had authority over the Children of Isrā'īl – Explanation of the Illness and the Cure by the Shaykh Dr. Salih al-Fawzan [page:188]

Ibn abi Ad-Dunya[3] collects a narration on the authority of Ammar bin Yasir and Ḥudhayfah who reported that the Prophet said: "Indeed, if Allāh wants to trial a people, he causes their children to die and makes their women barren so the trial befalls and none are shown mercy."

He[4] also reported from Malik bin Dinar who said: "I read within the early scriptures: 'Allāh says: I am Allāh the King of all kings, the hearts of the kings are in My Hand. Whoever obeys Me, I shall cause the kings to be a mercy to their subjects, and whoever disobeys me, I shall make them a trial upon their subjects. So do not preoccupy yourselves with insulting the kings, instead, repent to Me and I shall make them kind to you.'"

Also from the *Mursal* narrations of al-Hasan: "If Allāh wills good for a people, he places their affairs in the hands of their wise ones and their spoils in the hands of their forbearing ones. However, if he wills harm on a people, he places their affairs in the hands of their feebleminded ones and their spoils in the hands of their miserly ones."[5]

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[1] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [28]

[2] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [29]

[3] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [26]

[4] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [30]

[5] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [31]

Al-Imām Aḥmad[1] and others reported from Qatada: "Prophet Musa said: 'My Lord, You are above the heavens and we are on the earth. What is the differentiating sign between Your pleasure and Your displeasure?' He said: 'If I employ the righteous over you, it is a sign of My pleasure. And if I employ your evil ones over you, it is a sign of My Anger of you.'

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[2] reports from al-Fudayl bin 'Iyad who said: "Allāh revealed to some of His Prophets: If those who know me disobey Me, I will empower those who do not know Me over them."

He[3] also reported on the authority of Ibn Umar in a narration attributed to the Prophet: "By The One Whose Hand my soul is in, the Hour shall not be established until Allāh sends out dishonest rulers, immoral ministers, oppressive governors and corrupt scholars of misguidance. Their appearance will be that of the pious, but their hearts will be more foul than the corpse. The desires will be conflicting, and Allāh will set a dark trial against them that will leave them perplexed. By The One Whose Hand my soul is in, Islām shall weaken strand by strand until 'Allāh, Allāh' will not be mentioned. You will enjoin the good and forbid the evil, or Allāh will empower your evil ones over you, and they will inflict the worst punishments on you. Then your pious one will supplicate, but it shall be rejected. You will enjoin the good and forbid the evil, or Allāh will send those who do not have mercy towards your young or respect your elders."

On the authority of Sa'īd bin Jubayr who narrates from Ibn Abbas who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'There is not a people who undercut the people or cheat on the measuring scales except that Allāh deprives them of rain. Fornication has never become prevalent in a society except that death also becomes widespread. Usury does not become prevalent in a society except that Allāh trials them with insanity, and murdering one another has never become prevalent except that Allāh empowers their enemy over them. The actions of the sodomites do not become prevalent except that sinkholes appear around them, and people have never abandoned enjoining the good and forbidding evil except that their actions stopped being raised to the heavens and their supplications become unanswered.'" This narration has been collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[1] on the authority of Ibrahim bin al-Ash'ath.

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd

[2] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [33]

[3] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [34]

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] and other sources on the authority of Urwah who narrates from Aisha who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ came to me and was out of breath, so I knew from his face that something had incited him. He did not speak until he performed ablution. Then he left, and I stuck closely to the wall of my house. He rose on the pulpit, praised Allāh and said: 'O' people, Allāh has said to you: 'Command with the good and forbid the evil before there comes a time wherein you invoke Me and I do not answer you, you seek victory from Me but I do not grant it to you and you ask Me but I do not give you.'"

Al-'Umari mentioned: "From a person's heedlessness and disinclination from Allāh is to see what angers Allāh yet overlook it, and not enjoin the good or forbid the evil in fear of someone who can never harm or benefit you (the creation)." He also said: "Whoever does not enjoin the good and forbid the evil out of fear of the creation will be demeaned and no longer obeyed. If he orders his children or those under his guardianship, they would undermine his right over them."

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[1] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-Uqubat [35]. Also collected by At-Ṭabarānī in al-Kabir 10/45 [10992].

[2] 4/159 [25255]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4004].

Al-Imām Aḥmad[1] collected in his *Musnad* on the authority of Qays bin Abi Hazim who said: "Abū Bakr As-Siddiq said: 'O you people! You recite this Ayah but fail to implement it accordingly:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا ٱهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۚ ﴿١٠٥﴾

'O you who believe, take care of yourselves! You shall not be harmed by those who are misguided if you have followed the guidance.' [al-Mā'idah:105]

I heard the Messenger of Allāhﷺ say: 'When the people see the wrongdoer and they do not take him by the hand -in another wording: If they see evil and do not rectify it- then soon Allāh shall envelope you in a punishment from Him.'"

Al-Awza'i narrates from Yahya bin Abi Kathir, who narrates from Abū Salama, who narrates from Abū Hurairah who said: "The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: 'If the misdeed is concealed, it does not harm anyone except the perpetrator, and if it is apparent and left un-rectified, it harms the masses.'"[2]

Al-Imām Aḥmad reports from Umar bin al-Khattab[3] who said:

"The towns are on the verge of destruction, yet they are inhabited." It was said: "How will they be ruined whilst people are in them?" He replied: "If the immoral ones reign over the righteous and the tribe is led by its hypocrite(s)."

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[1] 1/2,7 [1,16,29,30,35]. Also collected by Abū Dāwūd [4338]. At-Tirmidhī [2168]. Ibn Mājah [4005]. Ibn Ḥibbān [304].

[2] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [40].

[3] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [44].

Al-Aqza'i reports from Hassan bin 'Atiya who reports from the Prophet who said: "The evil ones amongst my nation shall prevail over the righteous until the believer amongst them hides just as the hypocrites hides amongst us today."[1]

Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya[2] mentions on the authority of Ibn Abbas in a narration attributed to the Prophet: "There will come a time wherein the heart of the believer will dissolve [feel much pain], just as salt dissolves in water." It was asked: "What will be the reason O' Messenger of Allāh ﷺ?" He replied: "From the evil he will witness and not be able to rectify."

Al-Imām Aḥmad reports on the authority of Jarir that the Prophet said: "There is not a people wherein sin becomes prevalent around them whilst they outnumber the perpetrators and are stronger than them except that the punishment encompasses them all."[3]

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[4] on the authority of Usama bin Zayd who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say: 'A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown in the Hell Fire, and his intestines will spill out, and he will encircle them like a donkey goes around a millstone. The people of Hell Fire will gather around him and say: O so-and-so! What is wrong with you? Didn't you use to order us to do good deeds and forbid us to do bad deeds? He will reply: Yes, I used to order you to do good deeds, but I did not do them myself, and I used to forbid you to do bad deeds, yet I used to do them myself.'"

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[1] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [45].

[2] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in al-'Uqubat [46].

[3] Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad 4/364 [19230]. Abū Dāwūd [4339]. Ibn Mājah [4009].

[4] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of the Beginning of Creation, Chapter: The Description of the Hellfire and That It Is Created [3267]. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Worldly Abstinence and Heart Softeners, Chapter: The Punishment for the One Who Commands To Do Good and Does Not Do It Himself [2989].

Al-Imām Aḥmad mentioned in Az-Zuhd that there was a Rabbi from the children of Isrā'īl who would receive men and women who would frequent his house so that he would admonish them and remind them of the days of Allāh. On an occasion, he witnessed one of his children harass a woman, so he said: "Be cautious my son, be cautious my son." Consequently, he fell from his bed, broke his spine, his wife had a miscarriage and his children were killed. Allāh then revealed to their Prophet to inform this Rabbi that He shall never provide him with truthful offspring. His anger for My sake did not amount to any more than: "Be cautious my son, be cautious my son."

Also in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Beware of the sins that people deem insignificant, for indeed they accumulate against an individual until they destroy him.' The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ struck a parable. It was of a group of people who found themselves in a barren land before they eventually found food. So one of the men would go and fetch wood and return with it, and another man would do the same until they gathered a vast amount and kindle their fire, then they cooked their food.'"

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[2] on the authority of Anas bin Malik who said: "You indulge in sins which are more insignificant to you than a hair while we considered them at the time of Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to be from the destructive sins."

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[1] 1/402-403 [3818].

[2] Book of heart softeners [6492].

Also in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim[1] on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar who said that the Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: "A woman was punished on account of a cat that she trapped until it died, consequently, the woman entered the Fire. She did not feed or give it something to drink, nor did she allow it to eat from the vermin across the earth."

Abū Nu'aym collected a narration in *Hilyatul Awliya*[2] on the authority of Ḥudhayfah who was asked: "Did the Children if Isrā'īl abandon their religion abruptly in one day?" He replied: "No, rather, if they were commanded to do something, they would not, and if they were prohibited from something, they would partake in it until they became detached from their religion, just as a man becomes detached from his garment."

Thus, some of the Pious Predecessors have derived from this that sins are an avenue to disbelief, just as a kiss leads to intercourse, music leads to fornication, a look leads to lust and as illness leads to death.

Also in *Hilyatul Awliya*[3]on the authority of Ibn Abbas who said: "O' perpetrator of the sin, do not feel assured that you will not taste a dreadful outcome. That which follows the sin is worse than the sin itself: A lack of shyness from the Angels on your left and right whilst you are indulging in the sin is worse than the sin itself. Your laughter whilst you are unaware of how Allāh will deal with you is worse than the sin itself. Your joy in accomplishing the sin is worse than the sin. Your sorrow in missing out on the sin is worse than the sin itself. Your fear of the wind that may blow your veil whilst you are sinning, and your heart not being moved by Allāh's observation of you is worse than the sin itself. Woe to you! Do you know the error of Prophet Ayub that caused him to be trialed in his body and lose his possessions? A needy person sought his aid from an oppressor in a moment of desperation, but he did not aid him, nor did he repel the oppressor from his oppression; thus, Allāh trialed him."

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Sharecropping, Chapter: The Virtue of Providing Water [2365]. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Peace, Chapter: The Impermissibility of Killing a Cat [2242].

[2] [1/279].

[3] [1/324].

Al-Imām Aḥmad said: "We were informed by al-Walid who said, I heard al-Awza'i say, I heard Bilal bin Sa'd say: 'Do not look at the insignificance of the misdeed. Rather, consider whom you have disobeyed.'"

Al-Fudayl bin Iyad said: "The sin is magnified in the sight of Allāh according to how insignificant it is to you, and it shrinks in the sight of Allāh according to how significant it is to you."

It has been said: Allāh revealed to Prophet Musa "O' Musa, the first to die among My creatures was Iblis (Satan). That is because he disobeyed Me, and I consider those who disobey Me among the dead."

In the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad and At-Tirmidhī on the authority of Abū Salih who narrates from Abū Hurairah[1] who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'Verily, when the servant (of Allāh) commits a sin, a black spot appears on his heart. When he refrains from it, seeks forgiveness and repents, his heart is polished clean. But if he returns, it increases until it covers his entire heart. And that is the '*Ran*' which Allāh mentioned:

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 2/297 [7952]. At-Tirmidhī [3334]. Ibn Mājah [4244]. Ibn Ḥibbān [930]. al-Hakim 2/562 [3908].

كَلَّاۖ بَلۡۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُواْ يَكۡسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

'Nay, but on their hearts is the *Ran (cover)* which they used to earn.' [al-Mutafifin:14]

At-Tirmidhī declared: This is an authentic narration. Ḥudhayfah said: "If a servant sins, a black spot is placed on his heart until his heart resembles a spotted sheep."[1]

Al-Imām Aḥmad said[2]: We were informed by Ya'qub who said, we were informed by my father, who narrates from Salih, who narrates from Ibn Shihab who said, I was informed by Ubaydullah bin Abdullah bin Utbah who narrates from Ibn Mas'ūd that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "To proceed, O' tribe of Quraish, indeed you are worthy of this affair [leading the people] as long as you do not disobey Allāh. If you disobey Allāh, He will send someone to take you apart just like the tree bark is peeled from the tree." He had a piece of branch in his hand and peeled it revealing its shiny interior.

Al-Imām Aḥmad[3] narrated from Wahb bin Munabih who said that some of the revelation that descended to the Children if Isrā'īl is: "If I am obeyed, I am pleased. If I become angry, I send a curse, and my curse reaches the seventh child."

He also mentioned in Az-Zuhd[4] from Waki' who said, we were informed by Zakaria who narrates from 'Amir who said: "Aisha wrote the following to Mu'āwīyah': 'To proceed; indeed, if the servant disobeys Allāh, those who used to praise him would turn to dispraise him.'"

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[1] Collected by Abū Dāwūd in Az-Zuhd [285]. Abū Nu'aym in *Hilyatul Awliya* [1/273]. al-Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān* [2810].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* 1/458 [4380].

[3] Az-Zuhd [289].

[4] [915].

Abū Nu'aym[1] narrates from Salim bin Abi Ja'ad who narrates from Abū Ad-Darda' who said: "One should beware from receiving a curse from the hearts of the believers whilst he is unaware." He went on to say: "Do you know what this is from?" I replied: "No." He said: "Indeed, a servant may isolate himself to disobey Allāh, so Allāh places a hatred towards him in the hearts of the believers, whilst he is unaware."

Abdullah the son of (Imām) Aḥmad reports that when Muhammad bin Sirin was overcome by his debts, he was struck by anguish and he said: "Indeed, I know that this anguish is a result of a sin I committed forty years ago."

Here is a subtle point that people make a mistake in regarding sins. It is that they do no see the effect of the sin immediately, as it could be delayed. So the servant deems that there will not be any effect afterwards, just as the poet said:

If the wall doesn't produce dust when it crumbles — then there will never be dust after it has fallen

Glory be to Allāh! How much damage to the creation has this calamity caused! How many blessings has it eradicated! How many tribulations has it incited! There are plenty of knowledgeable ones who have been deceived through this ploy, let alone the ignorant! The deluded one has not become aware that the sin corrupts, even if it takes a while just as the poison does and just as the wound if it is reopened after some time.

Al-Imām Aḥmad reported in Az-Zuhd on the authority of Abū Ad-Darda who said: "Worship Allāh as if you see Him, consider yourselves amongst the dead, know that a small amount of good will suffice you from a large amount of something that distracts you. Know that righteousness does not die, and the sin is never forgotten." Some of the avid worshippers looked at a boy to wonder over his looks. As a result, they were told in their dreams: "They shall see its effects after forty years." Nonetheless, this is the case even though the sin also has an immediate effect that does not delay. Sulayman At-Taymi said: "Indeed a man can perpetrate a sin in seclusion and awake in the morning and its shame is visible on him."[1]

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[1] [1/215]. Also collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [766].

Yahya bin Mu'ath Ar-Razi said: "I am astounded that someone with intellect can say in their invocation: 'Allāh, do not allow my enemies to gloat over me,' yet he causes all of his enemies to gloat over him!" It was asked: "How is that?" He replied: "He disobeys Allāh and every enemy of his gloats over him on the Day of Resurrection."

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[1] Collected by Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya in At-Tawbah [195].

The Ill Effects of Sins in This Life and the Hereafter

Sins have a repugnantly vile and damaging effect on the heart and body in the worldly life and the Hereafter, the likes of which none can truly know except Allāh.

From them is: **The deprivation of knowledge**. Knowledge is a light that is thrust by Allāh into the heart, whilst sins extinguish that light. When al-Shāfiʿī sat before Malik and studied under him, Malik was impressed by what he witnessed from his astuteness, sharp intelligence and excellent understanding, so he said to him: "I see that Allāh has placed light into your heart, so do not put it out with the darkness of disobedience."

Al-Shāfiʿī also said on another occasion:

I complained to Waki' about my poor memory — so he instructed me to leave off sins

He said to me: Know that this knowledge is a blessing — and the blessings of Allāh are not given to sinners

From them: **The deprivation of provisions.** Al-Imām Aḥmad collects in *al-Musnad:* "Indeed, a servant is deprived of provisions due to a sin he perpetrates." [1] Just as piety is a reason for attaining provisions, abandoning it is a reason for destitution. The provisions of Allāh have never been gained by anything as powerful as the abandonment of sins.

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[1] 1/670 [1814]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4022]. Imām Aḥmad 37/68 [22386]. Ibn Ḥibbān [872].

From them: **A feeling of desolation that the sinner feels in his heart between him and Allāh.** The kind that does not measure up to or compare to any pleasure, even if all the pleasure of this life were combined, they would not equate to filling the void made by this feeling of desolation. This is something that only those with life in their hearts can comprehend.

And the wound doesn't cause pain to the dead

If sins were only abandoned out of caution from feeling this desolation, it would be worthwhile for the one who possesses intellect.

A man complained to the 'learned' ones about a feeling of desolation that he finds in his heart, he said:

If the sins have made you desolate — leave them if you will and be affable

There is nothing more bitter to the heart than the pain of a sin in succession of another, Allāh's aid is sought.

From them: **Seclusion from the people,** especially the righteous, because he will feel some isolation from them. Every time this feeling strengthens, they grow further apart, he is deprived from benefiting from them and draws even nearer to the party of Satan as much as he distances himself from the party of Allāh. This feeling intensifies until it becomes controlling, thus appearing between him and his spouse, his children, his relatives and even with his own self to the extent you may even find that he is dejected. Some of the Pious Predecessors have mentioned: "Indeed, I disobey Allāh, and I notice it effects in the behavior of my riding beast and my wife."

From them: **A difficulty in accomplishing matters.** He does not focus on a task except that he finds it obstructed or extremely difficult to complete. This is parallel to the one who obeys Allāh, He will make his tasks easy. Thus, whoever renounces piety shall have his tasks made difficult for him. It is astounding! How one finds that all the doors to good are shut in front of him, and the benefits have obstructions before them and the paths to them are blocked, yet he does not know how it has happened?

From them: **An actual darkness one finds in their heart.** He senses it just like he senses the darkness of the dark night when it covers the horizon. This equates the darkness of sin on his heart to the tangible darkness in his vision. Indeed, obedience is light, and sin is darkness. And every time this darkness intensifies, so does his confusion until he falls into innovation, misguidance and destructive actions whilst unaware, just like the blind person if he were to solely walk out on a dark night. This darkness develops until it is visible in the eye and continues to grow until it becomes a blackness that is visible on the face.

Ibn Abbas said: "Indeed, the good deed illuminates the face, casts light into the heart, brings vast provisions, builds strength in the body and attracts the love in the hearts of the creation. Indeed, the sin darkens the face, casts darkness into the heart, brings weakness to the body, a depreciation in provisions and a hatred in the hearts of the creation."

From them: **Sins weaken the heart and body.** As for the weakness it causes to the heart, it is obvious and continues to weaken it until it completely exhausts any life in it.

As for the weakness in the body, it is due to the strength of the believer stemming from the heart. As for the immoral one, even if he is physically strong, he is actually weak when the strength is required, and his strength will betray him at a time of dire need. Reflect over the physical strength of the Persians and the Romans and how it let them down in their moment of dire need, for they were defeated by the faithful ones using their physical and spiritual strength of the heart.

From them: **Being prevented from carrying out obedience**. It would be enough of a punishment for a sin that it prevents one from performing an act of obedience in its place, stopping the path to another act of obedience and a third and a fourth and so on and so forth. Thus, many acts of obedience being cut short, each better for an individual than the worldly life and all its possessions. This scenario is similar to one wherein a man eats a meal that causes him a lengthy illness that prevents him from many other meals that are more delicious. Allāh's aid is sought.

From them: **Sins reduce lifespan and erase the blessings.** Just as righteousness increases a lifespan, immorality shortens it. However, the scholars have differed here. A group of them said the shortage in the life span of a sinner is in fact the disappearance of its blessings and its loss. Undoubtedly, this is true, and it is a portion of the effects of sin.

Another group of them said it actually decreases just as sustenance decreases. Allāh set reasons for an increase and blessing in sustenance, and He has done the same for the lifespan. They said there is no objection that achieving an increase in lifespan comes through particular means, just as it may decrease due to particular reasons. Sustenance and length of life, happiness and wretchedness, health and illness, wealth and destitution, since they are all decreed by the Lord, it is also correct to say that He decrees whatever He wills through particular means that He has set that gain and necessitate them.

A third group declared that the effect that sins have in the shortening of life is in reference to the true essence of life which is the life of the heart. Hence, Allāh has declared that the disbeliever is dead, without life, as He said:

أَمْوَٰتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَآءٍ ﴿٢١﴾

"They are dead, without life." [An-Nahl:21]

The true essence of life is the life of the heart, and his age only signifies his lifespan. His age only signifies the length of period of his life, they are the hours in his life. So righteousness and obedience increase this time.

In summary, if the servant turns away from Allāh and becomes preoccupied with sins, his days that make up the true essence of life would have been squandered, and he will only realize the effect of this frivolity on the day he will say,

يَقُولُ يَـٰلَيْتَنِى قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِى ﴿٢٤﴾

"I wish I had put something forth for my life." [al-Fajr:24]

Either he has regard for his worldly and afterlife, or he does not. If he does not, he has wasted his entire life and it has fruitlessly passed him by. However, if he does have some regard, then his path has become long and difficult due to the obstacles and the means to good have become difficult due to his preoccupation with their contrary factors, and this is the true deficiency of a person's life.

The secret here is that the age of a person is the length of his life, but there is no life without a devotion to his Lord, appreciating a love for Him and His remembrance whilst favoring His pleasure.

Sins Give Birth to Their Counterparts

From the harms of sin is that a sin will produce another sin similar to it, and they will give birth to one another until detaching and relieving oneself from it and becomes difficult. As some of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) said: "From the punishments of performing a sin is to successively perform another sin, and from the rewards of performing a good deed is to successively perform a good deed." Therefore, if an individual performs a good deed, the deed tells its close counterpart to activate into action, if the person does as much, a second one will be called into action and so on and so forth. Thus, the gains are multiplied, and the rewards increase. The same applies to the misdeeds until each of the two that are being practiced - whether it is sins or misdeeds - become firm prerequisites, indispensable attributes and resolute abilities within a person. On one hand, if a good person renounces obedience to Allāh, he becomes uncomfortable within himself, he feels as if the land and its vastness becomes closely constricted and gains a sense of being like a fish out of water, until he re-commits to obedience, at which point his soul finds ease and his eyes delight. On the other hand, if a scandalous person devotes himself to the obedience of Allāh, he becomes uncomfortable within himself, his chest feels constricted and he feels helpless until he re-commits to sin. It has reached a point wherein many of the immoral individuals practice sin without drawing any pleasure from it or there being a need for it, they do it for none other than the pain they find in leaving it, as the leading scholar -al-Hasan bin Hani'- from them (the Sufi mystics) has declared:

A glass that I drink from out of pleasure — and another I drink as a remedy from the first

Another one said:

It was my medicine whilst it is my actual illness — just as the wine drinker remedies using the same wine

The servant continues to strive upon obedience, becoming accustomed to it, loving it and favoring it until Allāh, by His Mercy, sends Angels to drive him even further in obedience, and they aid him in maintaining a keenness for it and entice him towards it from the comfort of his bed or place of rest. Contrary to this, one can become accustomed to sins, love them and favor them over all else until Allāh sends the devils to incite him even further. So the first one strengthened the cavalry of obedience with the aid of Allāh, and it became his biggest form of assistance, whilst the second one strengthened his cavalry with the help of the devils, and they became his biggest form of support.

From them –and it is from the most frightful for an individual- **It weakens the resolve of the heart for good,** strengthening the determination for sin and gradually weakening the will power to repent, until any will to repent becomes detached in its entirety, to the extent that if half of him dies, he would not repent to Allāh. A superficial repentance heard on the tongues of the dishonest one is frequently heard whilst his heart is intertwined with sins, persistent upon them and determined to execute them whenever he can. This is from the most detrimental illnesses and the closest to destruction.

From them: **The vileness of the sin escapes him,** so it becomes a custom to the person and he does not deem it to be vile that the people witness him perpetrate the sin or that they may speak about him. This is the behavior of the leading figures in immorality and the pinnacle of shamelessness wherein he finds absolute pleasure. One of them may even boast about his sin and inform those who are ignorant of it, he may say: "O so and so, I did such and such!" These types of people are seldom forgiven and the avenues to repentance become obstructed or completely closed on most occasions, as the Prophet said: "My entire nation is forgiven, except the brazen. Indeed, being brazen is for Allāh to conceal the sin of the servant, then he awakes in the morning to embarrass himself and say: 'O so and so, on that day I did such and such,' shaming himself when he had spent the night being concealed by his Lord."[1]

From them is that: **Every sin has been inherited from a previous nation that Allāh destroyed.** Sodomy has been inherited from the people of Lūṭ. Unfairly over-accepting your rights and offering the rights of others insufficiently is an inheritance from the people of Shu'ayb. Haughtiness and corruption on the earth are an inheritance from the Pharoah and his people. Arrogance and tyranny are an inheritance from the people of Hud. Thus, the sinner is draped in the clothing of a selection of these nations, and they are the enemies of Allāh.

Abdullah bin Aḥmad has reported in the book of *Zuhd* by his father on the authority of Malik bin Dinar who said: "Allāh revealed to one of the Prophets of the Children of Isrā'īl to say to his people: 'Do not enter the passages of My enemies, do not wear the clothing of My enemies, do not ride the mediums of My enemies, do not eat the food of My enemies lest you become My enemies just as they are My enemies.'"

In the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[2] on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar who narrates from the Prophet who said: "I have been sent with the sword before the final hour so that Allāh is worshiped alone without partners, my sustenance has been placed in the shadow of my sword

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[1] This narration has been reported on the authority of Abū Hurairah. It has been collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Manners, Chapter: The Believer Concealing Himself [6069]. Also collect by Muslim in Az-Zuhd [2990].

[2] 2/50,92 [5115, 5667].

(spoils of war), and humiliation and inferiority has been set on the one who opposes my command. Whoever resembles a people is from them."

From them is: **Sins are a cause for a servant to become insignificant to his Lord, falling in status.**

Al-Hasan al-Basri said: "They became insignificant to Him, and they disobeyed Him. Had they have been honored, He would have safeguarded them."

If the servant becomes insignificant to Allāh, he (the servant) shall not find anyone to honor him, as Allāh says:

وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكۡرِمٍ ۩ ﴿١٨﴾

"Whoever Allāh humiliates, for him there is none to honor him." [al-Hajj:18]

Even if the people elevate him due to their need for him or out of fear from his evil, he remains the most despicable and degraded thing in their hearts.

From them: **A servant will continue to perpetrate a sin until it becomes insignificant to him,** and it diminishes in his heart. That is a sign of doom, because the sin magnifies with Allāh the more it diminishes in the eye of the perpetrator.

Al-Bukhārī mentions in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[1] on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd who said: "The believer sees his sins as if he was at the base of a mountain, fearing that it was about to fall upon him. The wicked person sees his sins as if (they are) flies are falling on his nose and he says: 'Like this' - motioning with his hand - to swat them away."

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[1] Collected in the Book of Supplications, Chapter of Repentance [6308].

From them is: **Other people and other living creatures will experience the evil effects of the sin**. Thus, he and others are scolded by the evil of sin and oppression. Abū Hurairah said: "Indeed, the birds will die in their nests from the oppression of an oppressor." Mujahid said: "Indeed, the livestock curse the disobedient ones from the children of Adam. If the droughts intensify and the rain is withheld, they say: 'This is from the evil of the sins of the children of Adam.'" 'Ikrimah said: "The creatures of the land and the vermin, even the beetles and the scorpions say: 'We have been denied rainfall due to the sins of the children of Adam.'"

So in reality, the punishment of his sin is not enough until he stands on the receiving end of a curse from the ones who have not sinned.

From them: **The sin inevitably causes humiliation.** All of honor can be found in the obedience of Allāh. Allāh said:

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًاۚ ﴿١٠﴾

"Whoever desires honor, then to Allāh belongs all honor." [Fatir:10]

In other words, one should seek it through the obedience to Allāh, he shall not find it elsewhere. It was from the customary supplications of the Pious Predecessors to say: "O' Allāh, grant me honor through my obedience to You, and do not humiliate me through sin."

Al-Hassan al-Basri said: "Even if their mules obey them, and they ride the horses swiftly, the humiliation of sin never leaves them. Allāh chooses to humiliate anyone who disobeys Him."

Abdullah bin al-Mubarak said:

I found that sins kill the heart — and an addiction to them brings humiliation

Abandoning sins is life to the heart — and it is good for your soul that you oppose it (the soul)

Who else other than the (oppressive) kings have spoiled the religion — and the evil scholars and the Rabbis

From them: **Sins corrupt the mind.** The mind contains a light and sin extinguishes this light, and if its light is extinguished the mind weakens and becomes deficient. Some of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) would say: "Only the one whose mind is absent disobeys Allāh."

This is an obvious point. For if he were to activate his thought process, it would prevent him from sins, bearing in mind he is within the grasp of the Lord and under His control; He sees all, he in within His kingdom, the Angels are testifying and they see him, the admonition of the Qur'ān forbids him, the admonition of faith forbids him, the reminder of death forbids him, the Hellfire forbids him and the good in this life and the Hereafter which is manifold to the joy and pleasure of the sin will escape him if he performs it. So would anyone with a sound mind belittle all of this and regard it with contempt?

From them: **If the sins accumulate and multiply, they become sealed over the heart.** Thus, he becomes from the heedless, and the *Salaf* explained the verse:

كَلَّاۖ بَلۡۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُواْ يَكۡسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

"No, rather, the stain (Ran) has covered their hearts from that which they used to earn." [al-Mutafifin:14] to be, 'one sin after another.'

Al-Hasan said: "It is one sin after another until the heart becomes blinded." Others have said: "When their sins grew, they enveloped their hearts."

The root of all this is that the hearts rust due to sins. If this rust increases, it becomes a stain that covers the heart (*Rān*), then it increases to become a seal and a cover until the heart becomes completely wrapped. If the affair reaches this stage after receiving the guidance and insight, the person retrogresses, and his reality becomes confused. He will begin to deem the highs as lows, at which point he will become subdued by his enemy and will lead him wherever he wills.

From them: **Sins include the servant in the curse of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.** He cursed the one who perpetrates particular sins, whilst some are worse than others, and they warrant the perpetrator to be cursed even more. He cursed the tattooist and the one who receives the tattoo, the wig maker and the one who wears hair extensions, the one who plucks the eyebrows and the person who receives the treatment, and the one who files the teeth and the one who receives the treatment.

- He cursed the one who consumes usury, issues it, records it or testifies for it.
- He cursed the one who marries a divorced woman with the intention of making her lawful for her former husband and upon the one for whom she is made lawful.
- He cursed the thief.
- He cursed the consumer of alcohol, its server, its seller, its buyer, the one who receives a fee for it, its presser, the one for whom it is pressed, the one who conveys it, and the one to whom it is conveyed.
- He cursed the one who changes the boundaries of the lands and the signs unjustly.
- He cursed the one who curses their parents.
- He cursed the one who uses something with a soul as target practice.
- He cursed the effeminate men and the masculine woman.
- He cursed the one who slaughters for other than Allāh.

- He cursed the one who invents an innovation or harbors an innovator.
- He cursed the picture makers.
- He cursed the one who practices sodomy.
- He cursed the one who insults their mother or father.
- He cursed the one who misguides a blind person on his path.
- He cursed the one who performs sexual acts with an animal.
- He cursed the one who brands an animal in the face.
- He cursed the one who harms a Muslim or plots against him.
- He cursed the women who visit the gravesites and anyone who makes it a place of worship or places lanterns over the graves.
- He cursed the one who antagonizes a woman against her husband or a servant against their master.
- He cursed the one who performs intercourse through the anus.
- He informed that the Angels curse the woman who renounces the bed she shares with her husband throughout the night until the morning.
- He cursed the one who ascribes to other than his father.
- He informed that the Angels curse the one who raises an object as a weapon against their brother.
- He cursed whoever insults his Companions (Allāh be pleased with them).
- He cursed the one who causes corruption on the earth, cuts ties of kinship or harms the Prophet(s).
- He cursed the one who conceals the revelation of Allāh.
- He cursed the one who [falsely] accuses the chaste, unaware and believing women of fornication and immorality.
- He cursed the one who deems the way of the disbeliever to be better than the way of the believer.
- The Messenger of Allāhﷺ cursed the man who wears women's clothing and the woman who wears men's clothing.

- He cursed the one who bribes, takes bribes and the intermediary between them.
- He also cursed for other actions.

If there were nothing in these actions other than the detriment of the perpetrator being contempt with being amongst those who would receive the curse of Allāh, His Messenger and the Angels, it would have been enough to leave them.

From them: **Being denied from an inclusion in the invocation of the Messenger of Allāhﷺ and the Angels.** Allāh ordered His Prophet to seek forgiveness for the believing men and women, He said:

ٱلَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ ٱلْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَٱغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُواْ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ
ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٧﴾ رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ٱلَّتِى وَعَدتَّهُمْ وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ
إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨﴾ وَقِهِمُ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ﴿٩﴾

"Those who carry the Throne and those around it [the Angels] exalt Allāh with praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who have believed, [they say] our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented and followed Your way and protect them from the punishment of Hellfire. Our Lord, and admit them to gardens of perpetual residence which You have promised them and whoever was righteous among their offspring. Indeed, it is You Who is the Exalted in might, The Wise. And protect them from the evil consequences of their deed." [Ghafir:7-9]

This is the supplication of the Angels for the believing repentant ones, those who adhere to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger, that is the only way for them. So none other than them should anticipate this invocation if they do not attribute themselves with the traits of the ones being supplicated for. Allāh's aid is sought.

Also from the punishment of a sin has been collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[1] on the authority of Samura bin Jundub who said: "Allāh's Messenger very often used to ask his Companions, 'Did anyone of you see a dream?' So those whom Allāh willed it for would narrate dreams to him. One morning the Prophet said, 'Last night two persons came to me [in the dream], woke me up and said to me, 'Proceed!' I set out with them and we came across a man lying down, and behold, another man was standing over his head, holding a big rock. Behold, he was throwing the rock at the man's head, striking his head with the rock. The rock would then roll away and the thrower would follow it and return. By the time he reached the man again, his head returned to the normal state. The thrower then repeated the procedure. I said to my two companions, 'Subhan Allāh! Who are these two persons?' They said, 'Proceed, proceed!' So we proceeded and came across a man lying flat on his back and another man standing over his head with an iron hook, and behold, he would put the hook in one side of the man's mouth and tear off that side of his face to the back of the neck, and similarly tear his nose from front to back and his eye from front to back. Then he turned to the other side of the man's face and did just as he had done with the other side. He hardly completed this side when the other side returned to its normal state. Then he returned to it to repeat what he had done before. I said to my two companions, 'Subhan Allāh! Who are these two persons?' They said to me, 'Proceed, proceed!' So we proceeded and came across something like a *Tannur* [a kind of baking oven, a pit usually clay-lined for baking bread].' He said: 'In that oven there was much noise and voices.' The Prophet added, 'We looked into it and found naked men and women, and behold, a flame of fire was reaching them from underneath, and when it reached them, they cried loudly. I asked them, 'Who are these?' They said to me, 'Proceed, proceed!' And so we proceeded and came across a river as red as blood.' The Prophet added, 'And behold, in the river there was a man swimming, and on the bank there was a man who had collected many stones. Behold, while the other man was swimming, he went near him. The former opened his mouth and the latter on the bank threw a stone into his mouth whereupon he went swimming again. He returned and every time the performance was repeated. I asked my two companions, 'Who are these persons?' They replied, 'Proceed! Proceed!' And we proceeded till we came to a man with a repulsive appearance, the most repulsive appearance you ever saw a man having! Beside him there was a fire and he was kindling it and running around it. I asked my companions, 'Who is this?' They said to me, 'Proceed! Proceed!' So we proceeded till we reached a garden of deep green dense vegetation, having all sorts of spring colors. In the midst of the garden there was a very tall man and I could hardly see his head because of his great height, and around him there were children in such a large number, more than I have ever seen. I said to my companions, 'Who is this?' They replied, 'Proceed! Proceed!' So we proceeded till we came to a majestic huge garden, greater and better than I have ever seen! My two companions said to me, 'Go up.' And I went up.' The Prophet added, 'So we ascended till we reached a city built of gold and silver bricks and we went to its gate and asked the gatekeeper to open the gate, and it was opened and we entered the city and found in it, men with one side of their bodies as handsome as the most handsome person you have ever seen, and the other side as ugly as the ugliest person you have ever seen. My two companions ordered those men to throw themselves into the river. Behold, there was a river flowing across the city, and its water was like milk in whiteness. Those men went and threw themselves in it and then returned to us, when they returned, the ugliness had disappeared, and they became in the best shape.' The Prophet further added, 'My two companions (Angels) said to me: 'This place is the Eden Paradise, and that is your abode.' I raised up my sight, and behold, there I saw a palace like a white cloud! My two companions said to me, 'That palace is yours.' I said to them, 'May Allāh bless you both! Let me enter it.' They replied: 'As for now, you will not enter it, but you will enter it.' I said to them, 'I have seen many wonders tonight. What does it all mean?' They replied, 'We will inform you: As for the first man you came upon whose head was being struck with the rock, he is the symbol of the one who studies the Qur'an and then neither recites it nor acts on its orders and sleeps in neglect of the enjoined prayers. As for the man you came upon whose sides of mouth, nostrils and eyes were torn off from front to back, he is the symbol of the man who goes out of his house in the morning and tells a lie that spreads all over the world. And those naked men and women whom you saw in a construction resembling an oven, they are the adulterers and the adulteresses. And the man whom you saw swimming in the river and given a stone to swallow is the consumer of usury [*Riba*]. And the man with an ugly appearance whom you saw near the fire kindling it and going around it is Malik, the gatekeeper of Hell. And the tall man whom you saw in the garden is Abraham, and the children around him are those children who die with *al-Fitra* [the Islamic Faith i.e natural inclination]." In the narration of al-Barqani, it states: "They are the ones who were born upon the natural inclination." The narrator added: "Some Muslims asked the Prophet, 'O Allāh's Messenger! What about the children of pagans?' The Prophet replied, 'And also the children of pagans.' The Prophet added, 'My two companions added, 'The men you saw who were half handsome and half ugly were those who had mixed acts of good with another that were bad, but Allāh forgave them.'"

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Dreams, Chapter: Interpreting Dreams After the Dawn Prayer [7047].

Also from the effects of sin is: **They cause an assortment of immorality throughout the earth**, whether it be on the waters, or the air or the plants or the habitats.

Allāh said:

ظَهَرَ ٱلْفَسَادُ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى ٱلنَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى عَمِلُوا۟ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ﴿٤١﴾

"Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea due to what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of what they have done, perhaps they will return to righteousness." [Ar-Rūm:41]

Mujahid said: "If the oppressor is granted authority, he attempts to commit oppression and corruption. Due to it, Allāh withholds the rain therein and destroys the crops and the animals, and Allāh does not like corruption." Then he recited:

ظَهَرَ ٱلْفَسَادُ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى ٱلنَّاسِ

"Corruption has appeared throughout the land and the sea due to what the hands of people have earned." [Ar-Rūm:41]

By Allāh, it is not only in reference to your sea. Rather, it is every town located nearby a sea. 'Ikrimah said: "Corruption has appeared on the land and the sea. I'm not only referring to your sea. Rather, every town near water."[1]

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[1] Exegesis of At-Tabari

Qatada said: "As for the "land", they are the people in the deserts and as for the "sea", they are the people of the towns and the rural areas."[1]

I say: Allāh has named the sweet water, 'sea'. He said:

۞وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى مَرَجَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ﴿٥٣﴾

"He is the One Who merged the two seas, one is palatable and sweet and one salty and bitter." [al-Furqan:53]

There is no sweet water that is stagnant or stationary on the face of the planet, the sweet waters are the flowing rivers. As for the sea that is stationary, it is the salty waters, so Allāh named all those communities situated by the flowing waters with their name.

Ibn Zayd said: **"Corruption has appeared throughout the land and the sea." [Ar-Rūm]** He said: "It is in reference to sins."

I say: He meant that sins are the reason the appearance of corruption. However, if he meant that the corruption that has appeared is the actual sins, in which case **"So He may let them taste"** is in reference to the consequences and the reason.

Based on the first understanding, the intended meaning behind the corruption is the diminution, the evil and the pain that Allāh decrees to take place on the earth when the servants sin. Thus, every time they commit a sin, Allāh decrees a punishment on them. As some of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) said: "Every time you commit a sin, Allāh decrees that a punishment befall you."

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[1] Exegesis of At-Tabari

What seems to be the more apparent meaning –and Allāh knows best- is that 'corruption' is in reference to the sins themselves and their warranting factors, and this is made evident by the statement of Allāh:

لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى عَمِلُوا۟ ﴿٤١﴾

"...so He may let them taste part of what they have done." [Ar-Rūm:41]

This is our condition, He has made us taste miniscule consequences of our own actions, but had He made us taste the full extent of our actions, He would not have left a single creature to exist on the face of the planet.

Also from the effects on the earth of disobeying Allāh are the occurrences wherein the earth swallows the creatures, earthquakes and the eradication of blessings. The Messenger passed by the dwellings of the nation of Thamūd, so he forbade his own nation from entering their dwellings, drinking from their waters, collecting water from their wells and even mixing the feed prepared for the camels with their water due to the evil consequences of sins on water.

Likewise, the evils consequences of sins occur in the loss of fruits and other ills which appear in society. Al-Imām Aḥmad mentioned in his *Musnad*[1] within a narration that a *Hanżah* was found in the treasuries of *Bani Umayah,* which is a seed the size of a date pip. It was inside a sack that had written on it: "This used to grow during the era of justice."

Allāh has decreed many of these ills due the perpetrations of sins by the servants. I have been told by many of the elders in the desert that they were accustomed to extract much larger fruit and vegetation from the ground than there is now, and that many of these ills that are currently present were unknown to them; in fact, they came to light recently.

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[1] 2/296 [7949].

As for the effects of sin on the appearances and the rest of the creation, At-Tirmidhī collected a narration wherein the Messenger said: "Allāh created Adam, and his height was sixty cubits, and the creation has not ceased shrinking until now."[1]

When Allāh cleanses the earth from the tyrants, the immoral and the deceptive people, He then brings forth a righteous servant from the lineage of the Prophet's household to fill the world with justice as it had been filled with tyranny, combat the Jews and the Christians and establish the religion that Allāh sent His Messenger with. At that point, the earth will give rise to its blessings and it will return to it prior state, to the extent that a large number of people shall be sufficed by eating one pomegranate, and they can be shaded by its peel, a branch of grapes will fill the camels load, and the heavy camel will be enough of a food supply for a large number of people. This is an outcome of the earth being purified of sin and thus extracting its blessings bestowed upon it by Allāh that was once eradicated by sins and unbelief.

Undoubtedly, the punishments that Allāh inflicted on the people have effects that have remained on the earth awaiting whatever sins will trigger them. These effects on the earth are remnants of those sins that warranted the punishments of the previous nations, just as the sins perpetrated now are from the effects of the previous crimes. So Allāh's perfect Wisdom and Judgment are all in harmony, and the greater the crime, the greater the punishment is, and the lesser the crime, the lesser the punishment. It is in this manner that Allāh will also judge amongst His creation in the grave and after the resurrection.

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[1] This narration has also been collected by Al-Bukhārī in the Book of Prophets, Chapter: The Creation of Adam and His Children [3326]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Paradise [2841] – both on the authority of Abū Hurairah.

Reflect over the condition of the devil (Satan), his place and his abode. When he drew close to the servant and overcame him, the blessings were stripped of his life, his actions, his statements and his sustenance. And when the obedience to the devil exerted its effect on the land, the blessings were consequently stripped from any area wherein there was obedience to him in addition to his final abode of the Hellfire wherein nothing of mercy or blessings exists.

From the punishments of sin: **They smother that burning flame that is the sense of honor within the heart,** that is the burning instinct in his life for his own benefit that gives life to the rest of the body. This sense of honor and its intensity expels any waste and dispraiseworthy attributes just as a bellow chips away at the redundant layers on gold, silver and other metals. The noblest people are the ones who possess the strongest zeal and most intense sense of honor for himself, his dearest and the general masses.

Thus, the Prophet had the highest sense of honor for his nation, and Allāh possesses perfect Honor as has been authenticated through the narration collected in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī wherein the Messenger said: "Do you wonder at Sa'd's sense of honor? Verily, I have more sense of honor than Sa'd, and Allāh has more Honor than me."[1]

Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[2] on the authority of Aisha who said: "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'O nation of Muhammad ﷺ! By Allāh, there is no one more jealous than Allāh should a male or female slave of His commit adultery.'"

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[1] Narrated by al-Mughirah bin Shu'bahh. Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Capital Punishments [6846]. Also collected by Muslim [1499].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of the Eclipse, Chapter: Giving Charity During an Eclipse [1044]. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Eclipse, Chapter: The Eclipse Prayer [901].

Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[1]: "None has more sense of honor than Allāh, and for this He has forbidden shameful sins whether committed openly or secretly. None loves a valid excuse from His servants more than Allāh, thus He sent Messengers as bearers of good news and warders. None loves to be praised more than Allāh does, and so He Praises Himself."

This is the epitome of honor and benevolence and the pinnacle height of perfection. Since many of those whose sense of honor intensifies into extremities are led to swift retribution and punishment without room for a pardoning or acceptance of an apology, he may have an excuse, but his extreme sense of honor will not allow him to accept the excuse. On the other hand, many of those who leniently accept an excuse are led to do so by their lack of a sense of honor until they widen the scope of excuses whereby an excuse that should not be considered an excuse is taken as such, to the extent that many of them use the excuse of Divine Decree. Both sides of the spectrum are incorrect when used unrestrictedly. It has been authenticated that the Prophet said: "Indeed, there is a sense of honor that is loved by Allāh and a type that is hated by Allāh. The type that is hated is the one that is misplaced and unnecessary."[2] As for the commendable sense of honor, it is the one that has been coupled with a pardon in that one exercises their sense of honor when appropriate and pardons at times when it is appropriate. Whoever is like this is rightfully applauded.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of *Tafsir* (Qur'ān exegesis) [4634]. Collected by Muslim in the Book of Repentance [2760].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad 4/154 [17398].

Moreover, since Allāh possesses every attribute of perfection, He is the most deserving of praise, and nobody can truly fulfill His praises; He is how He has praised and commended Himself.

The one who possesses this sense of honor has an attribute that conforms to one of the attributes of Allāh, and whoever possesses an attribute that conforms to an attribute from the attributes of Allāh, that attribute will lead him by his reigns and guide him to a devotion to Allāh, draw the person nearer to Allāh, closer to His mercy and renders him as one of the beloved ones to Him. Allāh is Merciful and loves the merciful, He is Generous and loves the generous, Knows all and loves the people of knowledge, He is Strong and loves the strong believer whilst he is more beloved to Him than the weaker believer, He is Shy and loves those who are shy, He is Beautiful in every aspect and loves those who beautify themselves, *Witr* (One) and loves *al-Witr*.

If there were not any other punishment for sins other than that they afford an individual with the opposing attributes and deny him from being described with them, it would have sufficed as a punishment. As the passing thought transforms itself into a whisper, and the whisper turns into a desire, the desire strengthens into determination and conviction and then it becomes an action before it becomes an inseparable trait and a deep rooted and firm characteristic. At which point, ridding oneself of it becomes an improbability as much as any other characteristic that is part of an individual's personality.

What is meant here is that the more the association with sins strengthens, the more it removes any sense of honor for himself, his family or the general people from the heart. It could even weaken in the heart so much that the individual no longer condemns the condemnable, whether it be from himself or someone else. If he has reached this low, he has entered the realm of destruction.

However, many of them do not restrict themselves to a lack of condemnation, instead, they glorify immorality and oppression and other vile acts, they beautify it, invite to it, encourage it and pursue it. Thus, the *dayuth*[1] is the vilest creature and Paradise has been prohibited from him. The same applies to the one who legitimizes oppression and tyranny towards others and glorifies it. Take heed and look what a lack of condemnation and sense of honor consists of!

This indicates to you that the root of this religion is having a sense of condemnation for evil (*ghirah*), and so whoever does not have *ghirah*, lacks in his religion. This sense of condemnation protects the heart, and subsequently the limbs are protected consequently repelling all evil and lewdness or immorality. An absence of this feeling of condemnation for evil kills the heart; thus, killing the limbs and not having any shield against evil. The similitude of *ghirah* in the heart is that of a particular force that repels and combats illnesses as the immune system of the body does. If this force disappears, the illness finds an acceptant place to settle without being faced with any repellent; thus, it firmly positions itself causing destruction. It is also similar to the horns of a water buffalo which it uses to protect itself and its offspring, if they snap, the predator covets it even more because the horns are no longer a method of protection.

From the punishments of sins is the withdrawal of shyness, which is the essence of the life of the heart and the origin of all good. Its absence is an absence of all good. Al-Bukhārī[1] collected a narration wherein the Prophet said: "All of shyness is good." He also said: "One of the sayings of the early Prophecies which has reached the people is: If you do not feel ashamed [do not have shyness] do whatever you like."[2]

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[1] The esteemed scholar Dr. Salih al-Fawzan states that the definition a dayuth is: 'Someone who approves of any immorality in relation to his wife or female relatives, due to his lack of any sense of honor for them [Ghirah], and ghirah is a lack of condemnation for sins.' Refer to 'al-Jawab al-Kāfī Liman S'al 'An al-Dawā' al-Shāfī'. Explained by the esteemed scholar Salih al-Fawzān [pg: 265]. It is an explanation to this book.

There are two explanations to the above narration as mentioned below:

One: It takes the context of a threat and a warning. The meaning: Whoever does not have shyness will do as they please from the various vile acts, as the force that urges one to leave off the sin is shyness, so if there is an absence of shyness to prevent a person from vile acts, he will fall into them. This is the explanation of Abū Ubaid.

Second: In reference to the action itself, if you are not shy of Allāh, then perform it. However, it is still obligatory to leave anything that makes you shy before Allāh. This is the explanation of al-Imām Aḥmad from the narration of Ibn Hani.

Based on the first explanation, it is a threat similar to the statement of Allāh:

ٱعۡمَلُواْ مَا شِئۡتُمۡ ۝٤٠

"Do as you please," [Fussilat:40]

And based on the second explanation, it does not amount to a threat.

If it is asked: Is there a way to understand it in harmony with both explanations? I say: No, and they cannot be combined due to their conflicting content. However, accepting one of them would constitute a consideration of the other.

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[1] On the authority of 'Imrān bin Husayn. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Faith [37].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of the Narrations of the Prophets [3483, 3484], on the authority of Abū Mas'ūd.

The intended meaning here is that sins weaken a person's shyness which may remove itself entirely, he may reach a depth whereby he no longer cares that the people know of his evil actions or see them. In fact, many of them may inform others of their lowly condition and the evil that he perpetrates. His detachment from any shyness motivates him to do so. If a servant reaches this condition, there seldom remains any expectation for his rectification, as it has been said about such a situation:

If Iblis (Satan) sees his face — he welcomes and says: I have redeemed the one who will not succeed.

The word *Haya'* (shyness) is extracted from the word *al-hayat* (life). *Al-ghayth* (rainfall) is also known as *Haya* due to the life it brings to the ground, the plants and the animals. Likewise, shyness is the route through which you gain a life in this world and the next, and whoever does not have any shyness is dead in this life and wretched in the Hereafter. There is correlation from all angles between sins, a lack of shyness and a lack of condemnation for evil. Each one of them attracts the other and avidly seeks it out. Whoever has a shyness that prevents him from enacting the sin, Allāh will be shy to punish him on the day the servant meets Him, but whoever is not ashamed of sinning, Allāh shall not be shy to establish His punishment on him.

Also, among the punishments for sins is: **They weaken the veneration and glory of the Lord in an individual's heart. It also weakens his reverence of his Lord. This is inevitable whether a person wishes it or not.** Had the Lord been revered in an individual's heart and exalted, he would not have been audacious enough to sin. It may also be the case that the deluded one has been deceived to say: "I am led to sin out of the positive hope in my Lord and my eager expectation of His pardon, not the weak glorification of Him I possess in my heart." This is a severe contradiction of oneself, as the mighty stature and Majesty of Allāh in a person's heart and the high regard for His prohibitions will act as a barrier between him and the sins. Those who are audacious enough to sin have not observed the full right of Allāh, and how can the one who disparages His commands and prohibitions perform the full right of Allāh, glorify Him, extol Him and hope in Him? This is from the furthest impossibilities and clearest forms of falsehood!

It is sufficient as a punishment that the glory of Allāh and His prohibitions vanish from his heart and His right becomes diminished in his actions. Also, a portion of the punishment is that the esteem that the people held of him will be removed by Allāh from the hearts of the people, he becomes insignificant to them and they begin to demean him just as Allāh's commands became insignificant to him and he belittled them. The people's love towards a person will be determined in accordance to his love for Allāh. The degree of fear the people have of him will also be determined according to his own fear of Allāh and the degree of veneration he has for Allāh will determine the peoples regard for him.

How can one violate the prohibitions of Allāh and await the people to not violate him?

How can the right of Allāh be insignificant to him and not have the people degrade him?

How can he belittle the magnitude of the sins and not be belittled by the creation?

Allāh has indicated this in His Book amongst the punishment of sins and made their figureheads fall back into error for what they earned, veiled their hearts, sealed them with the sins, abandoned them as they forgot Him, made them insignificant as they disregarded Him and wasted them as they squandered His laws. Thus, Allāh said along the context of the creature's prostration:

وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ ۚ ﴿١٨﴾

"Whoever Allāh humiliates – for him there is no other granter of honor," [al-Hajj:18], when they demeaned the prostration to Him, belittled it and refused to perform it, He humiliated them and there was no one else to grant them honor after He had disgraced them. Who could possibly honor the one whom Allāh has humiliated? Or who can humiliate the one whom Allāh has honored?

Also, from the punishments of sin is: **They cause Allāh to abandon the servant, forsake him and leave him to his and Satan's own devices.** Therein is a destruction that is seldom recovered from.

Allāh says:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

"O you who have believed, fear Allāh. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow – and fear Allāh. Indeed, Allāh knows all of what you do. And do not be like those who forgot Allāh, so He made them forget themselves, those are the defiantly disobedient." [al-Hashr:18-19]

He commanded to fear Him and prohibited that any of His believing servants resemble those whom He ascribed as those who forgot Allāh. He also mentioned that He punished the one who abandoned this fear in that He made him forget himself, i.e., He made him forget the things that are of benefit to himself, the things that will cause his salvation, and the things that warrant the eternal bliss and absolute pleasure, joy and bounties. He made him forget all this as a recompense for forgetting His Lord's Greatness, the fear one should have of Him and the establishment of His commands. You will find the sinner negligent of his own welfare, squandering it as Allāh has sealed his heart from remembering Him. This individual has adhered to his own desires and his affair is ever in neglect. Neglect in the welfare of his worldly and afterlife affairs and neglect in his eternal joy, in exchange for the lowest possible pleasures, as if it is a summer cloud or an imaginary vision!

Dreams of the slumber or like a fading shadow — Surely, the intelligent one,
by this will never be conned

From the fiercest punishments is that of a person forgetting himself, disregarding it and squandering its share of piety to Allāh, defrauding it by trading it for a cheap price and in exchange for humiliation. He wastes his connection with the One he cannot do without, nor replace in exchange for things that can be easily replaced or exchanged.

Everything, if you squander it there is a replacement — But not for Allāh if
ever you squander his religion

Allāh may award a compensation for anything except Himself, he suffices for all things whilst none other than Him can suffice. He can deny the creation anything whilst nothing is denied for Him. He can protect from everything, but nothing can be protected from Him. Then how can a servant ever do away with the obedience to the One Who possesses this stature for even a blink of an eye?

From the punishments of sin is: **They expel a person from the realm of *Ihsan,* and they deny an individual the reward of the *Muhsinīn*.** If this *Ihsan* is absorbed into the heart, it obstructs a person from committing sin because the one who worships Allāh as if he can see Him has only reached such a stage due to the overwhelming remembrance, love, fear and hope he has for Allāh in his heart, wherein it is as if he sees

Him. It is that state that comes between a person and his urge to sin, let alone perpetrating the sin itself. So if he exits the realm of *Ihsan,* he loses out on an elite and righteous companionship, a pleasant life and complete bliss.

If Allāh desires good for an individual, He approves of his status within the realm of the believers; however, if the individual commits a sin that removes him from this realm –as mentioned by the Prophet: "The fornicator is not a believer at the moment he is committing fornication, the alcohol drinker is not a believer at the moment he is drinking alcohol, the thief is not a believer at the moment he is stealing, and the looter is not a believer when he is looting and people are looking on. So beware, beware! Yet the opportunity for repentance remains there."[1] – it expels him from the level of *Īmān (faith),* the individual loses out on a companionship alongside the believers and the perfect defense that Allāh affords them as Allāh defends the believers. He also squanders all the good that Allāh has assigned for the believers in His Book as a recompense for faith, which is approximately one-hundred traits, each of which being better than the worldly life and whatever is in it.

Amongst these traits is the tremendous reward, Allāh says:

وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾

"And Allāh will grant the believers a tremendous reward." [An-Nisa:146]

Another trait is the protection and defense from the evils and harms of this life and the next:

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī [2475]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Faith [57] on the authority of Abū Hurairah.

۞إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدَٰفِعُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ۗ

"Indeed, Allāh defends those who believe." [al-Hajj:38]

From them is the pleading for forgiveness from the angels who carry the Throne for the believers. Allāh says:

ٱلَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ ٱلْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ۖ ۝٧

"Those who carry the Throne and those around it exalt Allāh with praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who have believed." [Ghafir:7]

Also, the support of Allāh for them and none whom Allāh supports can be humiliated. He says:

إِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَنِّى مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ۚ ۝١٢

"Allāh is the ally of those who believe." [A-Anfal:12]

Also, from these traits is that the believers shall be in receipt of the lofty platforms with their Lord, a forgiveness of their sins and a generous sustenance.

From them is honor.

وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝٨

"And to Allāh belongs all honor, and to His Messenger, and to the believers." [al-Munafiqun:8]

Also, a special accompaniment from Allāh to the believers,

وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴿١٩﴾

"And Allāh is with the believers." [al-Anfal:19]

Also, from these traits is the rise in stature in this life and the next:

يَرْفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلْعِلْمَ دَرَجَٰتٍۚ﴿١١﴾

"Allāh raises those who believe from amongst you, and raises those who gain knowledge many degrees." [al-Mujadalah:11]

From them is the doubling in His Mercy that He affords the believers, granting them a light of guidance that they use to tread and the forgiveness of their sins.

From them is the love He offers them in that He loves them and renders them beloved to the Angels, His Prophets and His righteous servants.

Also, from the traits is that He secures them from any fear on the day wherein the fright will severely intensify. He promised:

فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴿٤٨﴾

"Whoever believes and does good shall not fear nor have sorrow." [al-Anʿām:48]

From them: They are the ones whom have the favor bestowed upon them, the same ones whom we have been ordered to ask for the guidance to their straight path seventeen times daily [referring to the number of obligatory units of prayer one must perform everyday in opening chapter of the Qur'ān].

Also, from the traits is that the Qur'ān is guidance and a cure for them.

قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ هُدًى وَشِفَآءٌ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
يُنَادَوْنَ مِن مَّكَانٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

"Say, 'It is, for those who believe, a guidance and a cure', and those who do not believe – in their ears is a deafness and it is a blindness to them, as if they are summoned from a distant place [they fail to understand]." [Fussilat:44]

Nonetheless, faith is the cause that attracts all that is good and every good in this life or the next is as a result of belief, whilst every evil in this life and the next is as a result of non-belief. Thus, how can anyone deem it so insignificant to perpetrate something that will expel them from the boundary of *Imān* (faith) and allow this action to be a barrier? However, he is not expelled from the boundary of being a Muslim, but if he persists upon this manner of sinning, it is feared that he will be afflicted with the covering over his heart and exit the fold of Islām entirely. Due to this, the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) felt intense fear, as some of them would say: "You fear the sins, and I fear disbelief [falling into it]!"

From the punishments for sin is: **They weaken the drive of the heart towards Allāh and the Hereafter,** or they hinder it or cease the journey in totality, not allowing an individual to proceed towards Allāh even one step. This is if they do not cause a person to deteriorate backwards! The sin conceals the desired destination, ceases the traveler and sets the one in pursuit back. The heart traverses to its Lord using its strength, and if it falls ill due to sins, this strength that drives it forward is diminished. If it completely ceases, he becomes cut off from Allāh in a manner that is seldom recovered from. Allāh's aid is sought.

Thus, a sin either kills the heart or strikes a perilous illness into it, or at the very least inevitably weakens its strength until it becomes accustomed to the eight things that the Prophet sought refuge from. They are: Worry and sorrow, incapacity and laziness, cowardice and miserliness, debt and being overpowered by others.[1] Each two of the eight are associated together. Worry and sorrow are associated with one another. If the undesirable occurrence on the heart pertains to an anticipated event in the future, it evokes a feeling of worry, but if it is an event that has past, it evokes a feeling of sorrow.

Incapacity and laziness are both associated together, if the servant's failure to fulfill the means to good and success is due to his inability, it is incapacity, but if it is due to a lack of desire, then it is laziness.

Cowardice and miserliness are both associated together. If someone does not wish to physically bring forth benefit, then it is cowardice, but if he refuses to do so financially, then it is miserliness.

Debt and an overpowering from others are both in association. Being overpowered and controlled by others, if it is deserved in its various forms, it is from the hardships of debt and an inability to fulfill it. However, if it is done wrongfully, it is from the overpowering of oppressive men.

Hence, sins are one of the most powerful means that attract these eight things as well as drawing the difficulties of severe calamities, having an evil end, a bad fate and being on the receiving end of the malicious joy and gloating of your enemies. And they are from the main reasons for a cessation in receiving the blessings of Allāh, deterioration in wellbeing, as sudden calamity and His anger.

From the punishments of sin: **They remove blessings and cause an affliction of trials.** No blessing is removed from a servant unless a sin is perpetrated, and no trial afflicts unless a sin is perpetrated. As Ali bin

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[1] Refer to the narration collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Supplications [6369] and collected by Muslim in the Book of Remembrance and Supplications [2706].

Abi Talib said: "No calamity descends without sin, and no calamity is raised without repentance." Allāh said:

وَمَآ أَصَٰبَكُم مِّن مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٍ ٣٠

"Whatever calamity has befallen you, it is from what your hands have gained, and He pardons much." [al-Shura:30]

Allāh also said:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِّعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ٥٣

"That is because Allāh will never change a blessing that He has blessed upon a people until they change themselves." [al-Anfal:53]

Allāh informed that He shall never change a blessing that He has blessed anyone with unless the person changes his own condition, such as exchanging the obedience of Allāh for disobeying Him, having gratitude to being ungrateful and exchanging the reasons that gain His pleasure for those that attract His anger. If he changes, his state is changed as a recompense and equal measure, and your Lord never oppresses anyone. If an individual exchanges sins for obedience, consequently, Allāh exchanges his punishment for wellbeing and his humiliation to honor.

Allāh said:

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوۡمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمۡۗ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِقَوۡمٖ سُوٓءٗا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَالٍ ١١

"Indeed, Allāh does not change the state of a people until they change what is within themselves, and if Allāh wants evil for a people there can be no defense against Him and there is not for them besides Him any ally." [Ar-R'ad:11]

Also, in some of the divine *Qudsi* narrations that have been reported, He said: "By My Might and Majesty, none of my servants shall be upon a condition that I love, then change to a condition that I hate except that I will treat him as he dislikes. None of My servants shall be upon a condition that I hate and then changes to a condition that I like except that I treat him in a manner he loves after treating him in a manner he dislikes."

The poet said it fittingly:

If you are experiencing blessings, look after them — Indeed the sins remove the blessings

Rid them with the obedience of the Lord by the servant — The Lord of the servants is swift to afflict with a calamity

Beware of oppression as much as possible — oppression of the servants is severely detrimental

Journey with your heart amongst the people — to see the remnants of those who oppressed

These are their dwellings that remain after them — testimony against them without doubt

Nothing was more harmful to them — than oppression, it is that broke them
How much of the gardens have they lost out on, and — palaces and other things that were hard on them

They reached the fire and lost the bliss — and what they gained was once
like a dream

Likewise, from the punishments: **The apprehension and fright that Allāh places in the heart of the sinner**, thus you always find him apprehensive and scared. Obedience to Allāh is His mighty fortress that secures an individual in this life and the next from all punishments if he enters it, and whoever leaves its boundaries shall be surrounded by perils from every side. Whoever fears Allāh will have their fears turned to safety, but whoever disobeys Him shall have his feeling of safety turned into fright. You do not find the sinner in a state other than as if his heart is between the wings of a bird. If the wind sways the door, he says: "I have been summoned," if he hears footsteps, he senses the horror that it may be the warner of his worst fears. He deems every cry to be against him and every evil to be creeping towards him. However, whoever fears Allāh, He grants him security from everything, but whoever does not fear Allāh, He makes him fear everything.

It is what Allāh decreed amongst the people ever since they were created —
that fear and crimes are a couple

From its punishments is: **Sins cause a strong feeling of desolation within the heart.** You find a sinner desolate with himself, with his Lord and with the creation, and the more the sins multiply, the stronger the feeling of desolation becomes. The bitterest life is the life of the desolate, and the most pleasant life is that of those who feel solace. If the intellectual one ponders and measures between the pleasure of a sin and its consequences and the fear and desolation, he will realize how bad his own condition is and how great his deception has been since he has sold the solace of obedience, its sanctuary, and its sweetness for the desolation of sins and what they necessitate from the feeling of apprehension.

If sins have caused you desolation —leave them if you wish and find solace

The secret in all this is that obedience brings a nearness to the Lord. And the more this obedience increases, the closer one becomes to his Lord. Sins distance a servant from their Lord, and the more the sins increase, the stronger the feeling of desolation becomes. This is why you notice a distance between an individual and his foe due to the distance that is between them, but if was close to him, he would find a comfort and affinity to the other person even if he was physically distant to him.

The reason for this desolation is the veil, and the more this veil thickens, the greater this feeling intensifies. Hence, heedlessness causes this feeling and sins cause it even more, and more so polytheism and disbelief. You will not find anyone who practices these misdeeds except that he is overcome by this desolation in accordance to the gravity of the sin, it reaches his face, his heart consequently becoming desolate and becoming distanced from others.

Also, amongst the punishments of sins is: **They divert the heart from its wellbeing and steadfastness to its illness and misguidance**. It will continue to be affected with this ailment, unable to benefit from the nourishment that gives the heart its life and wellbeing. Undoubtedly, the effects of sins on the heart are like the effects of ailments on the body. In fact, sins are the ailments of the heart and its illness, and there is no other remedy apart from relieving oneself from them.

In addition, the ones who righteously traverse on their journey towards Allāh are in agreement that the hearts do not achieve their desired destination until they reach their Supreme Master, but it does not reach its Supreme Master unless it is sound and healthy, and it can not be sound and healthy unless its ailment is remedied. All of this is not achieved without the struggle and opposition against the whims and desires of the soul. Its desires are its very illness, and the cure is opposing such desires. If the illness roots itself, it annihilates or comes painstakingly close to doing so.

Just as the one who forbids himself from whims and desires will attain Paradise as his final abode. The same applies to his heart in this life, a worldly existence that is incomparable to anything of this life in any way. Moreover, the difference between the two is like the difference between the abode of this worldly life and the bounties of the Hereafter. However, this is a matter that only those whose hearts have experienced both scenarios can truly believe.

So do not assume that the statement of Allāh:

إِنَّ ٱلۡأَبۡرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٖ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِنَّ ٱلۡفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٖ ﴿١٤﴾

"Indeed, the righteous will be in pleasure. And indeed the wicked will be in the Hellfire" [al-Infitar:13-14] is restricted to the bounties of the Hereafter and the Hellfire in the afterlife; rather, it refers to all three abodes the person will go through, i.e., the abode of the worldly life, the abode of the grave, and the permanent abode in the Hereafter. All abodes will contain a party experiencing bounties and a party experiencing the torment. So is there any bliss other than the bliss of the heart? And is there any punishment other than the punishment on the heart? Which punishment is more severe than fear, worry, sorry, a tightness in the heart, an aversion of the heart from Allāh and the Hereafter, a connection with other than Allāh, a non-relationship with Allāh and scattered thoughts in every valley? Anything that you devote yourself to or love other than Allāh [in a devotion and love one should direct to Allāh] will be an affliction of torment against you.

Anyone who devotes themselves to other than Allāh is tormented through it three times. In this life he is tormented by it before it even reaches him; if it reaches him, he will be tormented by it at that time, as he will fear losing it along with whatever he has gained through it as well as the disturbance and annoyance and the various conflicts he shall receive as a result of it. If he loses this thing, his self-torment intensifies as a result. These are three consequential punishments in this life. As for the life in the grave, it is a torment that can be associated with the pain of a distant departure with no return, a pain one feels when one realizes the bliss they have squandered by being preoccupied with its conflicting actions, a pain of the veil between you and Allāh, the pain of grief that tears through the insides. Hence, worry, despair and sorrow all have the same effect on the body as the vermin and the worms have on the corpse. In fact, their influence on the soul is permanent and continuous until Allāh returns it back to its corpse. At which point, the torment excels into something more disastrous and bitter.

So what is this in comparison to the bliss of the one whose heart is excited and galvanized with joy in attraction to their Lord, with a yearning desire to meet Him, finding pleasure in loving Him and a tranquil feeling in remembering Him? To the extent some of them exclaim at the time of death: "Joy!"

Others have said: "If the people of Paradise experience a similar condition to ours, they are undoubtedly in a pleasant life!"

Others say: "How destitute the people of this world are, they left it and never tasted the pleasantries of life within it, and they never tasted its greatest pleasure."

Others have said: "If the kings and the offspring of the kings knew the feelings we experience, they would have fought us for it with their swords."

Someone else said: "Indeed, in this life there is a paradise. Whoever does not enter it, will not enter the Paradise of the Hereafter."

O' you who has sold the most valuable opportunity for the cheapest price and been absolutely defrauded in their transaction whilst he believes otherwise. If you do not have sufficient experience to determine the value of the product, ask the evaluator.

How strange that you have merchandise that Allāh will exchange with you, its value is a permanent abode in Paradise and the one who was assigned to ensure the transaction is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, yet you have sold it for the most insignificant of prices!

If this is the action of the servant himself — who then can honor him after that

Allāh says:

وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ۩ ﴿١٨﴾

"Whoever Allāh humiliates, for him there is none to honor him, indeed Allāh does as He wills." [al-Hajj:18]

From the punishments of sin is: They blind the insight of the heart, extinguish its light, obstruct the path of knowledge and veil the necessities for guidance.

When al-Imām Malik met al-Imām al-Shāfiʿī and al-Imām Malik saw his qualities, he said to him: "I see that Allāh has placed a light in your heart, so do not turn it off with the darkness of sins."

This light can continue to weaken and wither whilst the darkness of sin strengthens until the heart becomes like the dark night. Look how many perils one can fall into whilst he does not see them, like a blind individual who walks in the night on a path full of dangers and hazards. How great is wellbeing and how quick is one to reach their own destruction!

Then this darkness spreads and spills over from the heart onto the limbs touching the face with its darkness in proportion to its strength and level. When the time of death comes, this darkness appears in the grave and fills it, as the Prophet said: "Indeed, these graves are filled with darkness over their occupants, and Allāh enlightens them through my supplication for them."[1] When the Day of Resurrection arrives, the people will be gathered, and the faces will be visibly black like lava. How hideous a punishment it is that is immeasurable to any pleasure experienced in the entire worldly life from its beginning to end! How then can it even be compared to an individual's portion of time even if it was filled with hardship and trouble within a period that is like a moment from a dream. Allāh's aid is sought.

Also, from the punishment of sins is: **They demean the soul, crush it, force it into hiding and regard it with contempt** until it becomes the smallest and most disregarded thing, just as obedience enhances, purifies and enlarges it.

Allāh said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا ﴿١٠﴾

"The one who purifies it has succeeded. And he has failed who fills it with sin." [Ash-Shams:9-10]

The meaning here is that the one who develops it and allows it to rise by the obedience to Allāh has succeeded, and the one who forced it into hiding, demeans it and disregards it has failed.

The origin of '*tadsiyah'* as mentioned in the above verse is '*concealing it.'* From this is the verse of Allāh:

يَدُسُّهُۥ فِى ٱلتُّرَابِ ۗ ﴿٥٩﴾

"...hides it in the dirt..." [An-Nahl:59]

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[1] Collected by Muslim in the Book of Funerals on the authority of Abū Hurairah [956].

So the sinner hides his soul behind the sins, conceals its actual position, he hides from the creation due to the evil of what he does. He has been crushed within himself, crushed in the sight of Allāh and crushed amongst the creation.

Obedience and righteousness to Allāh enlarges the soul and gives it honor until it becomes the noblest thing, the largest, purest and highest. Despite this, it remains insignificant to Allāh. However, it is through this insignificance that it has attained its honor, nobility and growth. There has not been anything more effective in shrinking the soul than the disobedience to Allāh, and there has not been anything that enlarges it and gives it its honor and loftiness more than the obedience of Allāh.

Also, from the punishments of sin: **The sinner is constantly under the captivity of his own devil**, within the prison of his desires and locked in the chains of his whims. Thus, he is a captive who is imprisoned and chained and there is no prisoner in a worst state of imprisonment than the one who has been captured by their worst enemy, or a prison tighter than the prison of desires or chains that are more difficult to escape from than the chains of one's whims. How then can a heart that has been captured, imprisoned and chained traverse to his Lord and the Hereafter? How can he even take one step?

Therefore, the heart becomes entrapped by its own ills from every angle. And the similitude of the heart is that of a bird, the higher it soars, the further it distances itself from the hazards and the lower it flies, the more it is surrounded by the hazards.

The narration states: "The devil is like the wolf against the human." Just like the sheep that has no protection in the midst of wolves is quick to its demise, the same applies to the servant if Allāh does not protect him through his piety, the wolf is the predator and there is no alternative. Piety is a preventative and a fortified shield between him and his wolf, just as it is a preventative between him and the punishment in the worldly life and the Hereafter. The closer the sheep is to the shepherd, the safer it is from the wolf, and the more it distances itself from the shepherd, the closer it is to danger. Thus, the safest place for the sheep is near the shepherd and the wolf snatches the stray, which is the furthest from the shepherd.

The root of all this is the inevitability of the ills affecting the heart much more quickly than they would the further the heart is from Allāh, and the closer the heart is to Allāh, the further the ills from him are.

A withdrawal and distance from Allāh is at varying levels, some more severe than others. Heedlessness distances a person from Allāh, and the distancing of sins are worse than that of heedlessness, and the distance of innovation is worse than the distance of sins and the distance of hypocrisy and polytheism is the worst of them all.

From the punishments is the demise of the sinner's status, stature and dignity in the sight of Allāh and the sight if His creation. The most noble creation in the sight of Allāh are the most pious ones, the nearest to Him and the most obedient to Him. This nearness is determined in accordance to the degree of piety. If one disobeys Him and opposes His command, he falls in His determination, thus, dropping his status amongst the people. Furthermore, if he is of no significance to the people, they treat him as such and lives a rotten existence amongst them and a worthless mention of lowly status of fallen stature without honor, happiness or joy. Indeed, a worthless mention and a fall in one's status or stature carries an anxiety, a worry and sorrow along, with it an absence of any joy or happiness. How can this pain ever be compared to a pleasure one might momentarily experience from a sin had it not been for the drunkenness of one's desire!

From the greatest blessings from Allāh on His servants is to raise his mention amongst the creation and raise his rank. Hence, He specified His Prophets and Messengers with this over everyone else, as He said:

وَٱذْكُرْ عِبَٰدَنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَيْدِى وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿٤٥﴾ إِنَّآ أَخْلَصْنَٰهُم بِخَالِصَةٍ ذِكْرَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٤٦﴾

"And remember Our servants, Ibrahim [Abraham], Isaac, Ya'qub [Jacob] – those of strength and religious insight. Indeed, We chose them exclusively with the specific quality of remembering the Hereafter," [Sād:45-46]

In other words, He specified them with a particular quality. It is a beautiful mention that they will be mentioned with in this life. It is the same reputation of honor that Ibrahim asked for in his statement as mentioned by Allāh:

وَٱجْعَل لِّى لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

"And grant me a reputation of honor among the later generations." [Ash-Shu'ara:84]

Allāh further mentioned about Ibrahim and his offspring:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٠﴾

"And We granted them, from Our mercy and gave them a reputation of high honor," [Maryam:50]

And He said to His Prophet Muhammadﷺ:

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ﴿٤﴾

"And We raised your mention." [Ash-Sharh:4]

The followers of the Prophet all gain a portion of this according to their inherited portion of obedience and adherence to them. All of those who disobey them miss out on this according to their opposition and sin.

From the punishments also is: **Sins strip their perpetrator from any names of praise and honor in exchange for an ascription to all the names of dispraise and humiliation.** They strip him of the name believer, righteous, benevolent, pious, obedient, pious ally, devout, reformer, worshipper, God fearing, repentant, pure, pleasant and the likes.

He is then draped with names such as evil one, sinner, oppose, doer of evil, corrupt, despicable, the one discontent with, fornicator, thief, murderer, liar, cheat, sodomite, traitor, cutter of family ties and the likes.

These are the names of disobedience, and as Allāh says:

بِئْسَ ٱلِٱسْمُ ٱلْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ ٱلْإِيمَٰنِ ⑪

"Wretched in the name of disobedience after faith." [al-Hujurat:11]

They are the names that warrant the wrath of Allāh, entry into the Hellfire and a life of debasement and lowliness. However, the aforementioned names attract the pleasure of *Ar-Rahman*, entry into Paradise, and bring an honor to the one over the people.

If it were only for the entitlement of receiving theses names and all that they necessitate as a punishment for your sin, it would have been a sufficient deterrent for those with sound intellect. Also, had there not been a reward for the obedience of Allāh other than gaining the success to be called by these prestigious names, it would have been sufficient as an order for the one with sound intellect. However, there is none to prevent if Allāh is the One giving, and there is no one who can give if Allāh is the one preventing, none other can draw one nearer if Allāh has distanced him and none can distance if Allāh has drawn him near.

وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ ۝١٨

"Whoever Allāh humiliates, for him there is none to honor him." [al-Hajj:18]

Also, from the punishments of sin is: **It particularly affects a deficiency in the mind.** You will not come across any two people in their right minds whereby one is obedient to Allāh and the other is a sinner except that the intellect of the obedient one is more astute, complete, more accurate, more sound minded, and he is predominantly correct.

Thus, you find that the Qur'ān addresses those of intellect, such as in His statement:

وَٱتَّقُونِ يَٰٓأُوْلِي ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ۝١٩٧

"Fear Me O' people of understanding…" [al-Baqarah:197], and:

فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ يَٰٓأُوْلِي ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْۚ ۝١٠

"Fear Allāh O' people of understanding, those who believe…" [At-Talaq:10], and:

وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ۝٢٦٩

"Only those of remembrance have understanding…" [al-Baqarah:269] – and the likes of such verses are numerous.

How can one have understanding and an astute mind if they disobey the One Whom they are within His grasp, inside His kingdom, he knows that He sees him at all times, yet one disobeys Him whilst he is unhidden to Him. Furthermore, he uses His blessings over him for the actions that anger Him and incites His wrath at all times, His curse, a banishment and an abandonment and rejection, leaving the person to himself and his enemy, thus falling in status before Him, being prevented from His Mercy, Pleasure and Love or receiving the eye's delight of seeing Him and being closer to Him or gazing at His Face amongst the group of believers to the other honorable rewards reserved for the people of obedience whilst on the other hand there being the many other forms of punishment reserved for the sinful ones?

What is the value of a mind that prefers an hour, a day or a year of illegitimate pleasure before it comes to an end as if it were a dream that never was over the permanent bliss and ultimate success? Had it not been for the mind that is the tool used to demonstrate the evidences, one would have been equal to the insane; in fact, the insane may be in a better position and receive harmless consequences. This is the case from this perspective.

As for its effects in the waning of the mind in one's livelihood, had it not been for the combined participation in this deficiency amongst everyone, the obedient one would have realized the deficiency of mind of the sinner, but the calamity (sin) is widespread and insanity is of different variations.

How peculiar of an affair it truly is! If the minds were sound, they would have understood that the way to attain pleasure, joy, happiness and a blissful existence is by pleasing the One Who possesses all blessings, and the pain and torment all comes as a result of angering Him. In pleasing Him, you receive your eyes delight, the joys of the soul, the life of the heart, the pleasure of one's inner-self and the most pleasant bounties. Whereby if a seed's worth was measured against the luxuries of this world, they would not equate. In fact, if the heart obtains the slightest portion, it would never settle for the pleasantries of this world as an alternative. Yet, he receives his pleasure from this life more than those who indulge in it do, untainted in his portion of luxury unlike the indulgent ones who are affected by worry, depression, sorrow and confrontations. Furthermore, the first individual may receive both blessings in wait for two blessings even greater, and whatever pain he may experience on route can be defined as Allāh says:

إِن تَكُونُواْ تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۖ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ ﴿١٠٤﴾

"If you should be suffering – so are they suffering as you are suffering, but you expect from Allāh that which they expect not." [An-Nisa':104]

Truly, there is no other deity worthy of worship except Allāh. How deficient is a mind that sells a pearl for dung, musk for waste and the company alongside those whom Allāh has blessed from the Prophets and the truthful and the martyrs and the pious in exchange for the company of those whom Allāh has become angry with, cursed, and prepared the Hellfire for – what an evil destination!

From the severest punishments to sin: **It imposes a cut in the relationship between a servant and his Lord.** If this censorship happens, all the means of good become severed whilst the means of evil become linked to him. What kind of success, hope or life is it when the routes to good have all been severed, and the connection between his Master whom he can never be without for even a blink of an eye is cut, whilst there is no other replacement, in addition to the means of all evil being connected to him, a unity between his own most vehement enemy and finding himself under the persuasion of his enemy whilst his ally has abandoned him? A soul does not comprehend what this severing of ties constitutes from pain and different types of torment!

Some of the Pious Predecessors said: "I see a servant positioned between Allāh and the Devil, if Allāh abandons him, the Devil consequently receives him, and if Allāh protects him, the Devil will not be able to reach him."

Allāh said:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِۦٓ ۗ
أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُۥ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِى وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّۢ ۚ بِئْسَ لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَدَلًا ﴿٥٠﴾

"And mention, when We said to the Angels, 'Prostrate to Adam' and they prostrated, except for *Iblis* (Satan). He was of the Jinn and departed from the command of his Lord, then will you take him and his descendants as allies other than Me while they are enemies to you?" [al-Kahf:50]

Allāh says to His subjects: "I have honored your father, raised his rank and favored him above the rest. Then I ordered all of my Angels to prostrate before him in honor of him and a display of dignity. They obeyed Me, but their enemy and his [enemy] refused my command and detached himself from obeying Me. So how can it then be right to take him and his descendants as allies instead of Me, obeying him in My disobedience, allying with him in displeasing Me, whilst he is the greatest enemy to you? Thus, allying with my enemy when I have ordered you to oppose him."

Whoever allies the enemy of the sovereign King becomes equal to the enemy, as a true devotion and obedience can never be accomplished and complete without an enmity to the enemy of the one who should be obeyed and the allying of the righteous. As for your claim that you are an ally to the King whilst you also befriend His enemy, this is impossible. This would even be true if the enemy of the sovereign King was not an enemy to you, so how should the case be since the enemy is also an actual enemy to you, and the enmity that is between you and him is more fierce than the enmity between the sheep and the wolf?! Thus, how can it ever be befitting for someone of sound mind and understanding to ally with their enemy, the enemy of their ally and master whom he has no other master other than Him?

Allāh forewarned about the evil of such a relationship, He said:

وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ ۞

"They are enemies to you..." [al-Kahf:50] just as He warned against it by saying:

فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِۦٓ ۞

"He departed from the command of his Lord." [al-Kahf:50]

Through this, it becomes evident that his enmity to his Lord and to us is a reason to have enmity against him. So why ally? Why do this exchange? How despicable of an exchange it is by the wrongdoers!

This address from Allāh consists of a subtle and remarkable reprimand. It is that I rivaled *Iblis* (Satan) because he did not prostrate to your father alongside My Angels; thus, my enmity to him was for you, yet the result of this is a truce between you and him!

Also, from the punishments of sins is: **They expunge the blessings of life, the blessings of sustenance, the blessings of knowledge, the blessings of actions and the blessings of one's obedience.** In summary, they expunge the blessings of one's religiousness and worldly affairs. You will not find someone who suffers more from a lack of blessings in their life, his religiousness and worldly life than the one who disobeys Allāh. No blessing has ever been removed from the earth unless the disobedience of the Creator causes it. Allāh said:

وَلَوۡ أَنَّ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡقُرَىٰٓ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱتَّقَوۡاْ لَفَتَحۡنَا عَلَيۡهِم بَرَكَٰتٖ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ ﴿٩٦﴾

"If the people of the towns believed and had piety, We would open the blessings from the heavens and the earth for them." [al-A'rāf:96]

Allāh also said:

وَأَلَّوِ ٱسۡتَقَٰمُواْ عَلَى ٱلطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسۡقَيۡنَٰهُم مَّآءً غَدَقٗا ﴿١٦﴾

"If they had been steadfast on the straight path, We would have delivered fresh water to them," [al-Jinn:16] and an individual can be denied their sustenance due to a sin they perpetrate.

In the *Ḥadīth:* "Indeed, Jibrīl blew into my soul that no soul shall die until it uses up its sustenance, so fear Allāh and seek your provisions lawfully, because you cannot attain what is with Allāh through sins." Also: "Indeed, Allāh has placed mercy and joy within contentment and certitude and placed worry and sorrow within doubt and discontent."

Another narration, which was collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in his book of Az-Zuhd, has been previously mentioned: "I am Allāh, if I am pleased, I bestow blessings and My blessing have no end. However, if I am displeased, I afflict a curse, and My curse reaches the seventh child."

The vastness of sustenance and actions are not determined by their abundance and nor is a lengthy lifespan determined by the abundance of months and years. Rather, the vastness in sustenance and a lifespan is determined by the blessing contained within.

We have also previously mentioned that one's age signifies their lifespan, and the one who turns away from Allāh has no life and is preoccupied by other than Him. In fact, the lives of the animals are better than such a person's life because one's life is through the life in his heart and soul, but his heart does not have life unless it knows its Creator, loves Him, worships Him alone, turns to Him in repentance, finds assurance in His mention and solace in being close to Him. Whoever loses this life has lost everything that is good, regardless how he is compensated for it. There is nothing in this world that can replace that life; rather the world and all its luxuries cannot replace it! Everything can be replaced if it is lost except knowing Allāh; if it disappears, it can never be replaced.

How can the one who is essentially destitute replace the One Who is never in need, the essentially incapable to the One Who can do as He wills, the dead for the One Who never dies, the created for the Creator, the one who is nothing and does not own anything for the One Whose essence is that of a perfect independent, life, existence and mercy? How can you replace the One who owns the heavens and the earth for one who does not own as much as a seed?

Undoubtedly, sins are a reason for the disappearance of blessings in a person's sustenance or life because *Satan* has been assigned to the perpetrator, he has authority over them, has surrounded them around these quarters and its occupants. Anything that is in association with it has a link to *Satan;* thus, it is void of blessings. Hence, mentioning the Name of Allāh has been legislated before eating, drinking, clothing oneself, riding and sexual relations with a spouse due to the blessings that are linked to the Name of Allāh and its banishment of *Satan,* therefore attaining blessings without opposition.

Anything that is not fulfilled for the sake of Allāh has its blessings revoked, it is the Lord who solely places the blessings; every blessing is from Him and anything attributed to Him is blessed. His Speech is blessed, His Messenger is blessed, His believing servant who instills good amongst the creation is blessed, His sacred house is blessed, the region of al-Sham is a blessed land – He mentioned as much in six verses across the Qur'ān. There is none that bestows the blessings other than Him, and there is nothing blessed unless it is ascribed to Him, meaning:

[ascribed] to His love, worship and pleasure. Nonetheless, all is ascribed to His Lordship. Anything He distanced from Himself - whether it is individuals, statements or actions - are all void of blessing without any good in them. And anything that is close to Him contains blessings in accordance to their nearness to Allāh.

The opposite of blessings is the curse. So a land that Allāh has cursed or a person He has cursed or an action He has cursed would all be from the furthest things from any good and blessings, along with anything associated to it, or remotely connected to it, there would not be a blessing in it. He cursed His enemy –*Iblis (Satan)*- and made him the most distant creature from Him, so anything associated to *Iblis* will be touched by the curse of Allāh in accordance to his nearness and association with *Iblis*.

Henceforth, the sinner is subject to the most extreme case of being devoid of blessings in their life, sustenance, knowledge and actions. Anytime that you disobeyed Allāh with wealth or body or position or action, it will be held against you and not in your favor. The only portion of one's life, wealth, strength, status, knowledge and action that he used in the obedience of Allāh will be to an advantage. Thus, you find individuals who live in this world for one hundred years or thereabout, but their true life has not amounted to ten years, just as some of them may own tons of sums of gold and silver, yet their actual wealth may not even amount to one thousand *dirham*. The same applies to status and knowledge.

At-Tirmidhī[1] reports a narration from the Prophet who said: "The worldly life is cursed, and cursed is everything in it, except the remembrance of Allāh, and what is aligned with it, and the scholar and the one in pursuit of learning."

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[1] [2322]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4112].

In another narration reported from the Pious Predecessors, it states: "The worldly life is cursed, cursed is everything within it, except what is for Allāh."

This is were the blessings are, in particular. Allāh's aid is sought.

Also, from the punishments of sin: **They cause their perpetrator to be lowered to the lowly ones after** he once had the qualities of being from the elite, as Allāh has created his creatures into two categories: those of a low position, and those of a high position. He made the highest abode for those of lofty actions and the lowest depths for those of lowly actions. He also made the people of obedience at the highest level in this world and the Hereafter, whilst the people of disobedience are the lowest in this life and the Hereafter. Just as He made the people of obedience the most noble of His creatures to Him, He has also made the people of disobedience the most insignificant of His creatures to Him. Honor is for the first group whilst humiliation and inferiority for the latter. It has been reported in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar who narrated from the Prophet who said: "Humiliation and inferiority has been set on the one who opposes my command."

Every time an individual performs a sin, he drops a level and will continue to fall until he ends up in the lowest state. However, every time he performs a good deed, he will be raised until he ends up in the highest position. In a person's life, he may live through some days wherein there is a combination of elevation in status from one perspective and descent from another, and whichever perspective overwhelmingly dominates the other will determine a person's position since the one who ascends one hundred levels and descends one level is not equivalent to the one who experiences the opposite.

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[1] 2/50,92 [5115, 5667].

However, one can be exposed to a grave error here. It is that an individual could descend to such a vast extent exceeding that of the distance between the east and the west and the distance of the heavens and the earth yet not be able to fill this distance if he rose one thousand levels in contrast to this one drop, as has been collected in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī who reported that the Prophet said: "Indeed the servant may utter one word that he does not pay any attention to casting him into the Hellfire further than the distance between the east and the west."[1]

Regression is something that is inescapable from mankind. However, there are some who regress due to a moment of lapse in focus, so whenever he breaks from this lapse he returns to his previous higher level or to one that is even higher depending on his level of renewed attentiveness.

From them are those whose descending motion goes towards a permissible action that he does not intend to use to fulfill any obedience. As for this one, whenever he returns to the obedience, his previous level becomes restored but may not reach it and could also surpass it. He could return to a higher level of zeal than he previously had, could fall to being even weaker or it could be restored to its initial level.

From them are those who traverse downwards into sin whether it be a major sin or one lesser than that. Such an individual would require a sincere repentance and a truthful return in order to be restored to his initial state.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter: Withholding the Tongue from Perils [6477]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Worldly Abstinence, Chapter: Withholding the Tongue from Perils [2988].

The scholars have differed: Does one return to the level he was previously at after repentance based on the repentance eradicating any trace of the sin making it as if it never were, or does one not return to their previous level based on the repentance only having an effect on the punishment being exonerated? And as for the level that one was once at, has it been squandered by him without trace?

They argue: On analysis, this individual was preoccupied with sin during a time he could have been rising and his rise in comparison to his previous actions are equivalent to a man who would use his wealth to gain more wealth, and every time his wealth would increase, so would his profits. But during the time of sinning, he lost out on his profit. However, if he were to continue the rise, he would do so from a lower position whereas he was continuously rising before. Between the two is a gulf in difference.

They have also said: the similitude of which is that of two men who are ascending using a staircase that has no end whilst they are tied in position, then one of then descended downwards even if it is only one step before resuming his ascent. In which case, the one who never descended would inevitably be in a higher position.

Shaykh al-Islām passed his judgment on this issue between the two parties adequately; he said: "Upon careful examination of the matter, it is that there are some who repent who reach a higher level than their previous one, there are others who return to the previous state, and there are others who do not recover."[1]

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[1] Minhaj As-Sunnah [2/434].

I add: This depends on the strength and excellence of the repentance and to what extent the sin has brought about a humbleness, servitude, repentance, caution and fear of Allāh. Also, the degree of weeping out of awe, such factors could strengthen so much so that they drive a person higher than their previous state and he could become better than he ever was before his sin. In which case, the sin could have indirectly have been a mercy, as it has expelled the illness of self-amazement from him; relieved him of self-confidence in himself and his actions; placed his neediness and helplessness before his Master; made him realize His power; allowed him to bear testimony to his status and the dire need he is in for his Master's protection, His forgiveness and pardon; expelled this onslaught against obedience from his heart; broken his nose from ever sneering above the rest or becoming arrogant or deeming that he is better than others; it has made him stop in front of his Lord as a wrongdoer and a sinner with his head hung low before his Lord - shy, scared, deeming his obedience insignificant seeing the magnitude of his error. He has come to know about himself as having deficiency and being unworthy whilst his Lord is singled out in Perfection, Praise and Loyalty; as it has been penned in the lines of poetry:

Favored is Allāh with Loyalty and — Praise, whilst the blame returns to man

He highly regards any blessing that he receives from Allāh and deems himself undeserving and does not see that he is worthy. He deems himself to be deserving of a greater hardship or calamity than the one that befalls him, and despite this, he sees that Allāh has been benevolent to him as He has not punished him according to the scope of his crime nor even for half or the smallest portion of it. His deserved punishment would even be unbearable for the sturdy mountains, let alone a weak and incapable servant.

Even if the sin is of a lesser degree, confronting the Mightiest Who is unrivalled in His Might, the Greatest Who is unrivalled in His Greatness, the most Noble Who is unrivalled in His Majesty, the most Beautiful and the One Who bestows every kind of blessing big or small in this way is from the most despicable, heinous and outrageous of things. Surely, the believer and non-believer frown upon confronting anyone of high status, high esteem or leaders of men in this manner. The vilest and least magnanimous people are those who confront such people with vileness, so reflect on the affair since it is the Mighty One Who possesses the heavens and the earth, their sovereign King and the only deity deserving of worship in all of the heavens and the earth.

If it had not been that His mercy overcame His anger and His forgiveness overcame His punishment, the earth would have been crushed due to those who present themselves to Him in an unbefitting manner. Had it not been for His forgiveness, the heavens and the earth would have been removed from their place due to the sins of the creatures. Allāh said:

۞إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُمْسِكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ أَن تَزُولَاۚ وَلَئِن زَالَتَآ إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِۦٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ﴿٤١﴾

"Indeed, Allāh holds the heavens and the earth, lest they cease. And if they should cease, no one could hold them in place after Him. Indeed, He is Forbearing and Forgiving." [Fatir:41]

Reflect over the conclusion of the above verse with the two names *al-Halīm* and *al-Ghafur.* Hence, if it were not for His Forbearance with the criminals and His forgiveness for the sinners, the entire heavens and the earth would cease to remain in their place.

Allāh has informed regarding some of the disbelief His servant commits in His statement:

تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنشَقُّ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ ٱلْجِبَالُ هَدًّا ۝٩٠

"The heavens are on the verge of rupturing from it and the earth split open and the mountains crumble in devastation." [Maryam:90]

Allāh expelled the first two humans from Paradise for one mistake the both of them committed and a command they opposed Him in. He made Iblis (Satan) accursed, banished him and expelled him from the kingdom of the heavens due to a sin he perpetrated and a command he opposed. As for us –the crowd of feebleminded ones- our state is as it has been said:

We connect one sin to another and hope — for the levels of Paradise in an everlasting bliss

Yet we know that He expelled –Adam and Ḥawā- from — the highest abode due to one sin

The intent here is that an individual can reach a better condition and a higher level than his previous one after repenting. The misdeed can weaken his zeal and cause his conviction to wane and afflict his heart with an illness that the repentance is not strong enough to restore to his original state. Nonetheless, an illness may disappear so that the wellbeing returns to its normal state, thus returning the individual to their good actions and their previous level. All of the aforementioned is with regards to one's deterioration towards a sin. However, if a person's deterioration reaches a more severe level, such that it has an effect on the essence of a person's faith - like having doubts or a distrust in creed or hypocrisy in the religion- in this case, one has reached a stage that is seldom returned from without a renewal of faith from its foundation.

From the punishments of sins is: **They cause other created beings to be audacious against the sinner.** A sinner exposes himself to the harm of the Devil, his misguidance, whispers, scaremongering, attempts to cause depression, causing forgetfulness of the causes for wellbeing and reminding about the causes of harm. These devils grow in boldness against an individual until they incite him to disobey Allāh.

The devils of mankind perform the same harmful tactics in his absence and presence. A sinner's family may also grow in insolence to harm him, as well as his servants, his children, his neighbors and even the animals! Some of the Pious Predecessors would say: "When I disobey Allāh, I notice it in the insolence of my wife and riding beast." In addition, those in authority will exercise their control over him, and if they were fair in reprimanding, they would exert the penalty set by Allāh on the person. A sinner's own soul may act insolently against him in that it intimidates him and challenges him, whereby if he were to direct it to do good it would neither comply nor submit, but instead it would drag him to his demise, whether he likes it or not.

This is because obedience is the fortress provided by Allāh. A fortress once entered entails that the person is secure, but if he leaves this fortress, he is left exposed to highway robbers and other than them, and the degree of perils faced by the soul is in accordance to the person's audacity in disobeying Allāh. In this case, he has nothing to repel these harms because the remembrance of Allāh, His obedience, giving in charity, guiding the ignorant, enjoining the good and preventing vice are all barriers of defense for an individual that repel the illness in accordance to their strength; however if this strength is lost, the illness overwhelms, consequently causing devastation.

An individual must possess a repellent, because the causes for good and evil are in a constant tussle with one another, and the final outcome rests with the stronger side, as previously mentioned. The more the side for good deeds strengthens, the stronger the repellent is, as it is a matter of certainty that Allāh defends those who have faith, and faith is comprised of speech and action, so the defense will be as strong as the strength of faith. Allāh's aid is sought.

From its punishments is that one's self will betray him in the time he needs it most. Surely, everyone is in need of knowing what benefits and harms him or her in this life and the next. The most knowledgeable of which are those who are most acquainted with the intricacies of this knowledge, and the strongest and most astute out of them all is the one who is able to control his soul's desires and use it to his advantage and dismiss whatever harms it. Here is where the knowhow, the ambitions and levels of the people differ. The most knowledgeable amongst them are those who know the causes of joy and despair best, and the most guided are the ones who prefer joy to despair, just as the most foolish ones are those who prefer the opposite.

Sins cause the betrayal of the soul in its most required moments, such as obtaining knowledge and valuing the noble, the lofty and the permanent to the abject, the lowly and discontinuous. The sins have concealed the full glory of this knowledge from him and prevented him from being occupied with the priorities and what is most beneficial for him in this life and the Hereafter.

Thus, if he is struck with discomfort and needs to relieve himself from it, his heart, soul and limbs fail him at that moment, and he becomes like a man who has a sword that has withered with rust that has been placed in its sheath so he is not drawn to use it, but his enemy appears to attempt to kill him, so he places his hand on the sword handle to unsheathe it and tries earnestly to pull it out, but it does not come out. He is overcome by his enemy, and he triumphs over him.

Such is the heart, it rusts and becomes ruined from sins and becomes contaminated with illness. Thus, if it wishes to combat the enemy, it does not find anything to fight with, and an individual combats, fights and proceeds with their heart and the limbs follow suit. So if the person does not possess any strength to resist, what is expected to happen?!

The same applies to the soul, it loses its vigor through whims and sins and weakens. This is as far as the reassured soul is concerned. However, if it is the soul that commands with evil, it becomes more audacious and intimidating. Whenever the second one strengthens, the first one weakens resulting in the final outcome in favor of the soul that commands with evil. It may even be the case that the reassured soul dies a death that cannot be revived making him dead in this world, dead in the life of the grave and living an existence in the Hereafter that does not benefit from. In fact, it is only a life that consists of pain.

Here, it is evident that an individual is failed by his heart, tongue and limbs from executing the things that are most beneficial to him when he is afflicted with discomfort, hardship or a calamity. So his heart does not incline to have reliance of Allāh, to return to Him, be focused in devotion to Him or be in a state of neediness of Him. The tongue fails to comply in remembering Him, and if he remembers Him in mention, he does not harmonize between his tongue and heart, so the heart is obstructed from complying with the tongue consequently affecting the remembrance. But the heart and the tongue do not both become obstructed together, so one may supplicate or mention Allāh; however, it may be through a heedless and distracted heart. If this individual seeks that his limbs aid him through an act of piety to repel the harm of sin, they do not submit to his will nor comply.

The above is all the effect of sins and disobedience, just like the one who has combatants to fight off the enemy but then disregards his combatants and fails to use them, weakens them and loses communication with them, but he then requires them to exert all their efforts to defend him when the enemy attacks whilst there is not any strength!

Along with this, there is a matter even more pressing, more frightening and more dangerous. It is that the heart and the tongue may fail to respond during the stupor of death and the moment of transfer from this life onto the meeting with Allāh. Perhaps, one may find themselves unable to utter the testimony of faith at that time, as the people have witnessed many a time with those who have been afflicted with this at the time of death. Some have even instructed others at that time to say: *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh* [There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh], instead, the person replied: "Ahh, Ahh! I cannot say it!"

It was said to someone else: "Say: *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh* [There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh]." Instead, the person replied: "*Shah, Rukh, I win,"*[1] then he passed away.

It was said to someone else: "Say: *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh* [There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh]." Instead, the person replied:

"The one who was tired one day and said — how do I reach the bath of Minjab."[2]

It was said to someone else: "Say: *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh* [There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh]." Instead he began to hum a melody "*Ta na na, tan tina,"* until he died.

Someone else was also instructed to say the same, but said: "How will what you say benefit me? There isn't a sin that I haven't committed," he then died without uttering it.

Someone else was also instructed to say the same but said about himself: "He doesn't believe what you say," then he died.

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[1] Reenacting a game of chess or draughts. 'Shah and Rukh' are chess pieces.

[2] This man was preoccupied and obsessed by a woman, so he remembered her at the time of death.

The same thing was instructed of someone else, so he said: "I want to say it, but my tongue is stopping me."

Someone who witnessed the final moments of some beggars informed me that the beggar would say: "A penny for the sake of Allāh, a penny for the sake of Allāh," until he died.

I was also informed by some of the merchants when someone close to them died and he was by his side, so they began to dictate "*Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh* [There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh]" to him. Instead, he would say: "This piece is cheap, this is a good buy, this is such and such," until he died.

Subhan Allāh! How numerous are the lessons witnessed from such events! And that which has been concealed from them and prepared for those who experienced this at their moment of death is even graver!

So if an individual has the presence of mind and strength and full comprehension and yet allows the devil to control him, and uses him in the disobedience of Allāh as he pleases, has sealed his heart from Allāh, denied his tongue from remembering Him and his limbs from acts of righteousness. What then would you think would happen when he loses his strength, his heart and soul becomes distracted with the pain of the stupor of death, whilst the devil has mustered all his strength and resolve gathering all he can to take advantage, and it would be the final actions so his devil will be at his strongest against him and the person will be at his weakest? Who do you see being saved in this scenario?

At which point:

يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ۚ وَيَفْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿٢٧﴾

"Allāh keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word, in worldly life and in the hereafter. And Allāh sends astray the wrongdoers, and He does as He wills." [Ibrahim:27]

So, how can one find the success to have a good end for those whom Allāh has sealed their hearts of their remembrance, followed his own desires and his affair was in vain? Thus, the success of a good end is far from a heart that is far from Allāh, heedless, in servitude to its own desires, captivated by its whims, dry tongued from His remembrance and [possessing] limbs that do not obey Him and become occupied with sin.

The fear of an evil end has petrified the pious, and it is as if the evil and oppressive ones have been guaranteed sanctuary!

أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْمَٰنٌ عَلَيْنَا بَٰلِغَةٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ إِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ سَلْهُمْ أَيُّهُم بِذَٰلِكَ زَعِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

"Or do you have oaths binding upon Us, extending until the Day of Resurrection, that indeed for you is whatever you judge. Ask them which of them, for that claim is responsible." [al-Qalam:39-40]

O' the one who feels safe from the evil of their own actions, have — you received a guarantee that you possess

You combined between two, false sense of security and desires — one of which is enough to destroy him

The good doers are on the path of fear — they traverse, it is a path you have not taken

You neglected in sowing the seeds due to foolishness — so how do you expect to reap what the people have sown

Along with this, the strangest thing is your abstinence in — a permanent abode for an abode you will leave

Who then is the foolish, by Allāh, is it you or — the one who has entered a transaction for a loss that he will gain?

Also, from the punishments of sin: **They blind the heart, if they have not weakened its insight at least.** The matter of the inevitable weakening of the heart has previously been mentioned. If the heart becomes blind, it loses sight of all guidance and its strength in executing this guidance within himself and in others depending on the level of weakness and strength.

The full integrity of a person revolves around two foundations: distinguishing truth from falsehood and valuing the truth over the falsehood. The status of the creation before Allāh in this life and the Hereafter vary depending on their differing in these two foundations. They are the two qualities that Allāh praised within His Prophets, He said:

وَٱذْكُرْ عِبَـٰدَنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْحَـٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَيْدِى وَٱلْأَبْصَـٰرِ ﴿٤٥﴾

"And remember Our servants, Ibrahim, Ishaaq and Ya'qub – those of strength and religious vision." [Sād:45]

This strength is the type that they used to actualize the truth, and the vision is the insight in the religion. Thus, He described them with uppermost comprehension of the truth and complete actualization of it.

The people have become divided in this regard into four categories: The group mentioned above makes up the noblest group of the creation and the most honored by Allāh.

The second group is the opposite of them. No religious insight and no strength in actualizing the truth. They are the biggest sore on the eye, tough to bear on the soul, the illness to the heart, they make the place feel constricted, cause the prices to soar and one does not gain anything from the company apart from shame and disgrace! The third type are those who possess religious insight and knowledge but are weak and unable to actualize the truth or call to it. This is the state of the weak believer, whilst the strong believer is better and more beloved to Allāh.

The fourth category consists of those who have strength, zeal and resolve but have weak religious insight, almost not even distinguishing between the allies of Allāh and the allies of *Satan*. He may deem every black object to be a date, every white object to be a piece of fat, the swelling as fat and the beneficial medicine to be poison.

None of these are fit for any leadership in the religion except those in the first category. Allāh said:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُواْ وَكَانُواْ بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

"And We made leaders from them who guide with Our command when they were patient and in Our signs they had sure conviction." [As-Sajdah:24]

So Allāh informs that they attained leadership in the religion through patience and sure conviction.

This is the group that Allāh exempts from the band of losers, He made an oath by time –which is the period in which both the winners and the losers pursue their objectives- that whoever else will be from the losers. He said:

وَٱلۡعَصۡرِ ١ إِنَّ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ لَفِي خُسۡرٍ ٢ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلۡحَقِّ
وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلصَّبۡرِ ٣

"By time. Indeed, mankind is in loss. Except those who believe, do righteous good deeds, enjoin the truth and persist upon patience." [al-'Asr:1-3]

Merely knowing the truth and being patient upon it was not enough, until they counsel each other with it, guide towards it and encourage with it.

Since everyone apart from the aforementioned are in loss, it becomes known that sins and disobedience blind the heart's insight making it unable to adequately comprehend the truth; they also weaken its strength and resolve, making it unable to exercise patience. Rather, it could continually target the heart until its comprehension becomes inverted just as the direction it takes along its journey takes the opposite route, thus, deeming falsehood as truth, truth as falsehood, good as evil and evil as good. It follows the wrong direction and returns from its journey towards Allāh and the pleasures of the Hereafter to traverse upon an alternative journey towards the place for the lowly souls that have become satisfied with the worldly life, become reassured by it, become heedless of Allāh and His signs and forsaken any preparation for His meeting.

If there only happened to be this punishment for sins, it would be enough of a deterrent for a servant to leave them off. Allāh's aid is sought.

On the other hand, obedience illuminates the heart, clears it, strengthens it, and grants it a resolve until it becomes like a clear mirror in its cleanliness and purity, and it becomes filled with light. If the devil approaches it, he is afflicted by its light the same way the devils who attempt to steal the revelation from the heavens are banished by the shooting stars. The devil will dread this heart like the wolf dreads the lion, the person who possesses such a heart would be able to subdue this devil until it collapses causing the other devils to gather and ask each other "What is the matter with him?" It will be said: "He was struck by a human, he has been afflicted by a look from a human."

A look from a heart that is free and enlightened — the devil is on the verge of being burnt with this light

Is this heart equal to a heart that has dark hopes, conflicting desires and has been taken by the devil as a settlement and home? He greets him when he awakens and says, "I have ransomed someone who will not be successful in this life or the next!"

Your comrade in this life and in the afterlife thereafter — you are my companion in every place

If you were in the abode of torment, then you — and I together are in torment and disgrace

Allāh said:

وَمَن يَعْشُ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُۥ شَيْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ لَهُۥ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَنَا قَالَ يَٰلَيْتَ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ ٱلْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَبِئْسَ
ٱلْقَرِينُ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَلَن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِذ ظَّلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

"And whoever is blinded from remembrance of *Ar-Rahman* – We appoint for him a devil, and he is to him a companion. And indeed, the devils avert them from the way of guidance while they think they are guided. Until, when he comes to Us, he says, 'Oh, I wish there was between me and you the distance between the east and west' – how wretched a companion you are. And never will it benefit you that day, after you have wronged, you are sharing in the punishment." [Az-Zukhruf:36-39]

So Allāh has informed that whoever is blind from His remembrance – which is the Book He revealed to His Prophet- and averts from it, is unable to see it, and has been denied the insight from understanding it, reflecting over it and knowing it as Allāh requests, in which case, Allāh will assign a devil to this person as a punishment for averting from His Book. He will be his companion that is inseparable from him in every situation, his ally and associate who is a wretched ally and a wretched associate.

Two who suckle from the same mother, made an oath — from the womb we shall never separate

Then Allāh informed that the devil obstructs his companion and ally from the path that leads to Him and His paradise, whilst this misguided and obstructed individual believes he is on the path of guidance, until they both come on the day of resurrection and one will say to the other: "If only there was between me and you the distance between the east and the west, how wretched of a companion you were to me in the worldly life! You misguided me from the guidance after it had reached me, you obstructed me from the truth and diverted me until I reached my demise, and you are a wretched companion to me today!"

And since it happens to be the case that one may feel slightly more comfort and a lighter burden if the calamity is shared with others, Allāh informed that this does not apply to those who are joint in the torment and that the companion shall not find rest or feel the least bit of joy as a result of his companions shared portion of the punishment. It may be the case that the calamities in the worldly life are eased if they are shared, as al-Khansa' said about her brother Sakhr when he was killed:

If it weren't for the many who are weeping around me — for their brethren, I would have killed myself

They do not cry for my brother as I do, but — I find solace through this shared pain

However, Allāh has prevented this method of ease from ever occurring amongst the people of the Hellfire. He said:

وَلَن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِذ ظَّلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ۝٣٩

"And never will it benefit you that day, after you have wronged, you are together in the punishment." [Az-Zukhruf:39]

Also, from the punishments of sin is: **They are an aid for his own enemy against him, and sins act as an army that strengthen the enemy to inflict war on the individual.**

This is because Allāh has trialed mankind with an enemy that does not leave him for even a blink of an eye. The individual sleeps, yet the enemy does not. The individual becomes distracted, yet the enemy does not. He and his troops see you and you do not see them. This enemy exerts his efforts in causing animosity at every possible opportunity and there is not a ploy that he is able to use except that he uses it on an individual whilst seeking the aid of his fellow brethren from the jinn and the devils amongst mankind. He lays the ropes for the trap wanting him to fall into major calamities, stretches out the traps, sets the snares and digs the ditches and says to his helpers: "There is your enemy, there he is, do not let him escape you, do not allow his end be Paradise and yours be the fire whilst his recompense is mercy and yours is the curse! You already know what has amounted of me from the disgrace, accruement and banishment from the mercy of Allāh, all of it was due to the human and he was the cause. So exert as much effort as you can to make them partners with us in this calamity, because we have already missed out on partnering their righteous ones in Paradise!" Allāh has foretold us all of this occurring from our enemy, and He has ordered us to be alert and prepare accordingly.

Since Allāh knew that the offspring of Adam have been trialed with this enemy, and that he has gained control over them, He provided the offspring of Adam with artillery to face him with and also granted the devils artillery to use and outlined the struggle between the two opposing sides in this life for the length of its existence, which merely amounts to a breath of air in comparison to the Hereafter. He purchased the lives and the property of the believers in exchange for Paradise, they combat for the sake of Allāh, so they are killed, and they kill, and Allāh informed that this is a certain promise made by Him in the noblest Books – the Torah, the *Injīl* and the Qur'ān. Then He informed that there is no one more loyal and fulfilling of their promises than He, then He ordered them to rejoice over this trade deal that if anyone wanted to see its worth should look at who the buyer is, and the value of the commodity that is being traded and under whose supervision and control this transaction has taken place. Which victory is greater than this one? And which transaction is more profitable than this? Thereafter, Allāh confirmed this by saying:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَٰرَةٍ تُنجِيكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ
وَتُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾ يَغْفِرْ
لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢﴾ وَأُخْرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَا ۖ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

"O you who have believed, shall I guide you to a transaction that will save you from a painful punishment. It is that you believe in Allāh and His Messenger and strive in the cause of Allāh with your wealth and your lives. That is best for you, if you only know. He will forgive you your sins and admit you to gardens beneath which rivers flow and pleasant dwellings in gardens of perpetual residence, that is a great attainment. And you will obtain another favor that you love – victory from Allāh and an imminent conquest, and give good tidings to the believers." [As-Saf:10-13]

Allāh did not empower this enemy over His believing servant who is His most beloved creature except that the struggle the servant goes through for His sake is the most beloved action to Him, his nearest are the highest in status and the closest to Him in devotion. Allāh decreed this conflict to identify His elite and the heart is the place that becomes familiar with the Lord, His love, worship, sincerity to Him, reliance and repentance. He assigned this conflict to them and aided them with Angels who are always by his side protecting him from every side successively replacing one another. They keep the individual firm footed and command him to do good, urge him to persist upon this good and relay the promise of nobility from Allāh to him, keep him patient and say: "It is only patience for a short while, then ease forever."

Then Allāh grants them more troops to aid them from His revelation and speech, He sent His messenger and revealed His book allowing the servant to build even further on his strength, even more on the aid he has already been provided and enhances his preparation even more.

In addition, He provided the person with a sound mind as an aid to him and a means to reflect. He provided him with knowledge as a counsel to him, faith to keep him resolute and as an aid and support, certainty in order to identify the true reality as if he sees what Allāh has promised his party and dear allies for commencing this struggle against His enemies. Sound intellect organizes the troops, knowledge places the tactics of war in their appropriate position, faith makes one resolute and strengthens insight whilst certitude urges one forward and carries him forward through a truthful campaign.

Then Allāh aids him through this struggle with an inner and outer strength. Thus, He makes the eye at the forefront, the ear to hear information, the tongue as an interpreter, the hands and feet are helpers and declared that the Angels along with the ones holding the mighty throne will seek forgiveness for him and Allāh to protect him from all harms and admit him into Paradise.

Allāh Himself has assumed the responsibility of defense of His believers, He has declared that they are His party, and the party of Allāh is the victorious one. He said:

وَإِنَّ جُندَنَا لَهُمُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ ١٧٣

"Indeed, our soldiers will be the ones who overcome." [As-Saffat:173]

He also taught His servants how to undertake this struggle and combined these instructions in four words:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱصۡبِرُواْ وَصَابِرُواْ وَرَابِطُواْ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ٢٠٠

"O you who have believed, *be patient, and endure, and remain stationed and fear Allāh* that you may be successful." [al-'Imrān:200]

This struggle cannot be successfully fulfilled without the accomplishment of these four words. One cannot be patient and persevere without enduring the enemy, which is to confront him. If he endures the enemy, he becomes in need of a further matter that is to remain stationed in this position, and that is to guard the channel that leads into the heart lest the enemy penetrates through, and guard the channels of the eye, the ear, the tongue, the stomach, the hands and the feet. These are the openings that the enemy enters through to probe within and corrupt whatever he can; thus, remaining stationed means guarding these channels and not leaving them vacant or exposed and allowing him to enter.

Here we have an example of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ who are the best of creation after the Prophets and Messengers, and they were the most successful in protecting and guarding against the devil, yet they abandoned the place that they were ordered to remain stationed in during the battle of *Uhud,* and the enemy encroached from therein resulting in what happened.

The uniting factor and pillar that maintains all this is the piety towards Allāh, and piety does not flourish unless it stems from patience. So look to your own self, and the meeting of the two conflicting sides, and the assembly of both camps, and how you gain the upper hand at times and how they gain it at other times.

The King of Unbelief

The king of unbelief has approached with his soldiers and entire camp, but he has found the heart behind a fortress seated on the throne of his kingdom, his command passes amongst his allies and his troops surround him and fight to defend him and his quarters, so the enemy could not proceed unless they penetrate through his entourage and his soldiers. Hence, they enquire about the most exceptional soldier he has and the closest one to the king. It is replied: "The soul." So the opposing king will command his troops to force entry through it and its desires and take particular notice of the things it loves, then use that and arouse the desire for it in him before carving this beloved feature into it, whether he is asleep or awake. If it feels reassured and at ease, release the sharp hooks and traps of desires, then pull him in with them. If these desires become engrossed in the heart, they become assistance for you against him, and now you have conquered the channels of the eyes, the ear, the tongue, the mouth, the hands and legs. So remain stationed at these posts as much as possible. Whenever you enter through them into the heart, he becomes a victim or a captive or riddled with injuries, so do not vacate these channels and do not allow another brigade to enter through them into the heart in order to remove you. However, if you are defeated, then work tirelessly to weaken the other brigade from even reaching the heart, so that even if it does reach the heart, it will be too weak to have an effect.

The Devils and the Eye

If you manage to overpower these stations, then ensure that the eye is not used for contemplation and reflection, and instead make it a means for pleasure and idleness. If he takes a look of reflection, then he corrupts it causing him to glimpse into heedlessness and desires because they are closer to him, more attached to his soul and easier for him. There you have it, the channel of the eye, for indeed I have not corrupted the son of Adam with anything as effective as the eye, and from there you shall gain your objective because I have not corrupted the son of Adam with anything as powerful as the sight. I plant the seed of desires into his heart through it, and then irrigate it with false hope, then I continue to promise him and allure him to false hopes and strengthen his resolve in that regard and lead him with the reigns of whims and desires until he becomes completely detached from being sin free.

Do not neglect this entry point, reap corruption as much as you can and make it insignificant to him. Say to him: "What does one look that leads you to remember your Creator, or the reflection over the glory of His creation and its beauty that has been created to for you to derive the evidence of His existence even amount to? Allāh did not create your eyes for no reason, and He did not create this image for it to be hidden from your sight."

If you manage to triumph over someone of little knowledge and immoral mind, say to him: "This image is an appearance of Allāh and a manifestation of Him." Then gradually incite him to the doctrine of pantheism. If he does not accept this, call him to the doctrine of general or specific immanentism, and do not settle for any less because through this, he shall become brethren to the Christians. Then, lead him to a warped form of chastity and conservation and an avid devotion to worship and abstinence in the worldly life before hunting him down with ignorance. These are my nearest successors and greatest soldiers. In fact, I am from their soldiers and aids.

The Devils and the Ear

Thereafter, block the channel of the ear from being penetrated or having anything destroy your efforts. Strive in only allowing it to hear falsehood, as it is easy on the soul and it beautifies it. Select the sweetest phrases and the most mesmerizing to the mind, then merge it well with all the soul's whims and desires. Input an evil word, if you see that he is responsive to it then add the rest. Every time you realize he deems something to be good, bombard him with it.

Beware that any speech from the speech of Allāh, or the speech of the Messenger or the speech of any sincere advisor should enter through this channel! But if you are overpowered in this regard and it does happen to enter, dwell in between it and the correct understanding or the opportunity to reflect or contemplate upon it or to take an admonition from it. This is accomplished either by entering something conflicting, or by portraying it as intimidating or daunting - and that it is a matter that will dwell between a person and their soul - or that you are unable to attain, and it is a heavy burden you cannot underestimate, or something similar to this. Or by making it seem unworthy whilst one should occupy themselves with something seemingly more important and highly regarded amongst the people, more valuable to them, more distinctive with a higher volume of customers. As for the truth, it is outdated and discarded, and the one who devotes himself to it is exposing himself to enmity, but whatever is common amongst the people is of a higher priority, and words to this effect. Thus, subjecting him to misguidance through every perspective whilst portraying the truth in a manner he will dislike and be burdened with.

If you wish to truly realize this, look at their brethren from the man devils and how they portray the enjoinment of good and the forbiddance of evil as excessiveness, an illegitimate harassment to extract people's mistakes, exposing oneself to unbearable trials, causing tribulation amongst the people and the likes. Whilst they present a distorted understanding of the *Sunnah* and the Attributes that Allāh has described Himself with and that His Messenger has described Him with in a manner befitting His Majesty as an attempt to resemble Him 'Tamthīl' to the creation and ascribe Him with humanization 'Tajsīm' and comparisons 'Takyīf'. They name the 'Highness' of Allāh above His creation, His ascension above the throne and Him being separate to the creation as 'Tahayuz' (restriction to a space), they refer to His decent to the first heaven (in a manner that suits His Majesty) as 'Taharuk and Intiqal (movement and relocation)." They refer to any attribute He has attributed to Himself such as The Hand or The Face as 'A'daa (limbs) and Jawarih (body parts)' and any action as 'Ḥawādith' (subject to events) and the actions of His Attributes as 'A'rad' (incidental attributes). Then they arrive at the warped understanding of negating whatever Allāh has ascribed Himself as by negating these concepts, and they delude the ignorant and those of weak insight that affirming the Attributes that have been mention in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* necessitate this understanding, presenting this rejection in the false image of elevation and glorification.

All this whilst most of the people are feebleminded, they accept something via a particular term whilst rejecting it through another wording! Allāh says:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَٰطِينَ ٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلْجِنِّ يُوحِى بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ ٱلْقَوْلِ غُرُورًاۚ ﴿١١٢﴾

"And thus We have made for every Prophet an enemy – devils from mankind and jinn inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion." [al-Anʿām:112]

Allāh named it **"decorative speech"** yet it is falsehood, but the proponent of this speech decorates and beautifies it as much as they can before injecting it into the deluded persons ear waves, thus, he is deceived. What is evidently clear here is that the devil has positioned himself at the entry point of the ear whereby he inserts anything that harms and does not benefit the person and obstructs anything that benefits him from entering. However, if something beneficial does enter against the devil's will, he endeavors to corrupt it.

The Devils and the Tongue

He goes on to say: Gather against the tongue now. Indeed, it is the strongest channel and directly situated facing the king. So make the speech that harms him become fluent upon it; and prevent it from uttering any remembrance of Allāh, or any quest for forgiveness by Allāh, or recitation of the Qur'ān, or delivering any sincere advice to His servants or dispensing beneficial knowledge. You have been assigned with two huge responsibilities pertaining to the tongue. Do not be concerned with which one you execute [either one is good enough]:

The first: Speaking falsehood, as uttering falsehood is considered one of your brethren and from you strongest allies and helpers.

The second: Being silent about the truth, as the one who is silent about the truth is also one of your brethren, but he is without a tongue. As for the first one, he is one of your brethren but possesses a tongue. Perhaps your second brother is even more advantageous to you. Have you not heard the speech of the advisor: "The one who speaks falsehood is a devils that speaks, whilst the one silent about the truth is a devil without a tongue."

Remain positioned, remain positioned at the entry point of this channel lest he speak the truth or withhold from any falsehood. Beautify speaking falsehood to him by any means and instill a fear into him to ever speak the truth by any means.

Know, my children, that the opening of the tongue is the channel I use to destroy the offspring of Adam, and I drag them with me on their faces into the Hellfire, how numerous are my victims that have fallen to their demise, and how numerous are the captives and casualties that I have taken!

I counsel you with a piece of advice, so memorize it well: If one of you pronounces something upon the tongue of his brethren from the humankind, whilst the other awaits on the tongue of the listener allowing the listening human to commend it, acclaim it and become amazed by it, thus requesting that his brother repeats it.

Be aids to one another by any means against mankind, and invade them from every door, and lay in wait for them on every path. Have you not heard my oath that I made in the name of their Lord wherein I said:

قَالَ فَبِمَآ أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَٰطَكَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَآتِيَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ
وَعَنْ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ وَعَن شَمَآئِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

"Because You have put me in error, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of the grateful." [al-Aʿrāf:16,17]

Do you not see that I have sat in waited on every path for the offspring of Adam, he does not escape one route except that he finds me on another until I fulfill my need or at least some of it. But their Prophet has warned them of this, he said to them: "The devil sits along the paths of the son of Adam. He sits waiting for him. He sits in the path to Islām, and he says: Will you accept Islām, and leave your religion, and the religion of your forefathers? But he disobeys him and accepts Islām. Then he sits waiting for him on the path to Islamic emigration, and he says: Will you emigrate and leave behind your land and sky? But he disobeys him and emigrates. Then he sits, waiting for him on the path to Jihād, and he says: Will you fight in Jihād when it will cost you your life and your wealth? You will fight and be killed, and your wife will remarry, and your wealth will be divided. But he disobeys him and fights in Jihād. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "Whoever does that, then he has a right from Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, that He will admit him to Paradise."[1]

Just like so! Sit in wait for them on every path to good. If anyone of them wishes to donate in charity, sit there and whisper to them: Will you spend this money in charity, and become like the one who is asking, on the same level? Have you not heard what I conveyed upon the tongue of a man who was asked for charity? He said, it is our wealth, if we give it to you, we become like you.

Sit in wait for him on the path to the hajj pilgrimage and say to him: It is a perilous and difficult journey, the one making it is exposed to death and a loss of wealth.

And sit in the path of all good actions by driving them away from it and mention the difficulties and obstacles. Then sit on the path of sins and decorate them to the offspring of Adam and beautify them in their hearts and make women the strongest aid for them in this cause. Enter the channels through the ploy of women, they are an excellent aid to you!

Thereafter, sit by the hands and the legs and prevent them from ever holding onto anything that will harm you or walking toward in its cause.

Know, that the biggest aid for you in maintaining control of these channels is reconciling with the soul that commands with evil. Help it, use it to your advantage, give it assistance and gain assistance from it. And be one with it in your war against the reassured righteous soul and work tirelessly to break it and defeat its resolve, and there is no way to do this other than cutting its supply. Thus, if its supply is cut, the supply of the soul that commands with evil is strengthened, it begins to comply with its aids to draw the heart out of its fortress, isolate it from its kingdom and replace it with this soul. It will not enjoin anything other than what you desire and love. It will not present anything that you detest and will not oppose you in anything you direct it to. In fact, if you direct it to something, it hastens to it.

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[1] Collected by An-Nasā'ī [3134]. al-Imām Aḥmad 3/483 [15958]. Ibn Ḥibbān [4593]. al-Bukhārī in At-Tarikh [4/187-188].

However, if you sense that the heart is challenging for its kingdom and you wish to be relieved of this, enact a marital contract between it and the soul, then decorate it, beautify it and present it in the best image a bride can appear in. Then say to it: Taste the pleasures of this bride, just like you tasted the trials of war and felt the injuries and combat strikes. Now, compare between these pleasures of reconciliation with the bitterness of that war, renounce the war because it is not a one-day event. Rather, it is a war connected to death, and you become weak as a consequence of an ongoing war.

Now –my children– seek assistance from two mighty soldiers that you shall never be defeated alongside:

One of them is heedlessness. Make the heart of the offspring of Adam heedless of Allāh and the Hereafter in any way. You do not possess anything more comprehensive in achieving your aim than that. Indeed, if the heart becomes heedless of Allāh you gain a firmly affixed position over it.

The second is the desires. Adorn them in their hearts and decorate them to their sight. Assume the onslaught with these two soldiers, as you will not have a more comprehensive tool against the offspring of Adam than these two. In addition, reinforce this heedlessness with whims and desires, and reinforce the whims and desires with heedlessness. Now pair up two heedless people and use them against the thoughtful and conscious one, as one cannot defeat five because the two heedless people have two devils by their side, that is four in total, and the devil of the thoughtful one is also with them.

Furthermore, if you see a group of people congregating for something that brings harm to you, such as the remembrance of Allāh or to study His commands and prohibitions and His religion whilst you are unable to separate them, then use the assistance of their kind –the human- draw them close to them and cause chaos in their ranks that give way separation.

In summary, prepare adequately for every situation. Enter to the offspring of the children of Adam from the gateway of their desires and ill-intent, then help them in achieving them, and be efficient assistors in his pursuit of attaining them. If they have the command from Allāh to persevere with patience, endure it and remain guarded in front of these channels, then you must also persevere, you must endure and you must hold your guard in front of these channels and grasp your opportunity at times of desires and anger as you will not be able to hunt down the offspring of Adam at a better opportunity!

You must also know that some of them have a weakness to the power of whims and desires whilst the influence of anger is weaker to him in this regard, so tread the method of desires and leave the method of anger. Some of them are weaker to the emotion of anger, but do not forsake the avenue of desires at the same time, and do not undermine its channel, because the one who cannot control themselves at a moment of anger will not control themselves when faced with desires. So couple between his anger and his desires, and merge the two and entice him towards his desires from the gateway of anger, and entice him to anger from the gateway of desires. It is also imperative that you know that you do not have a more comprehensive weapon than these two aforementioned weapons. I caused the expulsion of Adam and Ḥawā from the heavens through desires, and I instilled the enmity amongst their offspring using anger. And through that, I split their ties of kinship, spilt their blood through which one of the children of Adam killed his brother.

Know that anger is a live coal in the heart of the son of Adam, and the desires is a fire that rages from his heart. This fire can only be extinguished with water, prayer, remembrance of Allāh and *Takbīr.* So be ever so cautious to allow the offspring of Adam to approach the ablution or the prayer at his times of anger and desires, even though that is the command of their Prophet to them, as he said: "Indeed, anger is a live coal in the heart of the offspring of Adam. Have you not seen the way his eyes become red and his cheeks inflate? Thus, whoever senses this should perform ablution." [1] He also said to them: "Fire is extinguished with water."[2]

Allāh has instructed them to gain their assistance from patience and prayer, so obstruct them from it, make them forget it and gain assistance from their own desires and anger. The most far-reaching weaponry you have against them is the most damaging: Heedlessness and obeying desires. On the other hand, their most powerful weaponry against you and their sturdiest fortress is the remembrance of Allāh and the disobedience of their own desires. Thus, if you come across a man who opposes his sinful desires, flee from his shadow and do not go near him. The intended meaning here is that sins and any act of disobedience are a weapon and a reinforcement that a servant affords his own enemy with and assists them against his own self with, so they combat him with his own weaponry and he aligns with them against himself. This is the pinnacle of all ignorance.

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2191]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [4000] and al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 3/19 [11143], al-Hakim 4/551 [8543] and others.

[2] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [4784]. al-Imām Aḥmad [3/226]. al-Bukhārī in At-Tarikh [7/8] and At-Ṭabarānī 17/167 [443].

The enemies do not reach the ignorant one — as much as the ignorant reaches himself

From the most peculiar things is that the servant endeavors with all his efforts to disgrace himself whilst he claims that he is honoring it. He endeavors to deny it the highest and most noble gains whilst he claims to be working towards its ultimate prosperity. He exerts all efforts to debase, belittle and conceal his soul from any good whilst he claims that he is uplifting it and enhancing it! Some of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) would mention in their sermons: "How many disgrace themselves whilst he claims he is honoring it, how many humiliate themselves whilst they claim they are dignifying it, how many belittle themselves while claiming to enhance it, how many waste themselves whilst claiming that they are concerned with its rights. It is sufficient as ignorance that someone aligns themselves with their enemy against themselves. Through his actions, he reaches a point that his enemy could not reach alone." Allāh's aid is sought.

Sins Make a Person Forget Himself or Herself

Amongst the punishments of sins is that they cause servants to forget themselves, and if an individual forgets himself, he neglects, corrupts and destroy himself.

If it is ever asked: How can someone forget himself or herself? And if one forgets oneself, what then is remembered? And what is the meaning of forgetting oneself?

The response to this is: Yes, someone can utterly forget themselves. Allāh said:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

"Do not be like those who forgot Allāh, so He made them forget themselves. They are the corrupt ones." [al-Hashr:19]

So when they forgot their Lord, He abandoned them and made them forget themselves, as He said:

نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ ۗ ﴿٦٧﴾

"They forgot Allāh, so He abandoned them." [At-Tawbah:67]

Here, Allāh inflicts two punishments, the first: He abandoned them, and the second: He made them forget themselves. It is to mean that He disregarded, left of, abandoned and ignored. Tragedy is closer to such an individual than a hand is to the mouth! As for making him forget his own self, it is to make him forget any lofty recompense and the reasons for bliss, success, uprightness and whatever contributes to a person's perfection. He makes him forget all of that, so it never crosses his mind, nor does he note it as a point to remember, nor does he divert his attention to it to have some desire for it. It does not come to mind for him to ever aim for it or value it.

In addition, He makes the individual forget his own faults, deficiencies and wrongs, so removing them and rectifying his situation would never come to mind.

He also makes the individual forget the ailments of his self, his heart and its pains. Thus, he never feels the need to remedy his own heart nor endeavor to remove its ailments and illnesses that lead to corruption and ultimate destruction. This person is ill and has been debilitated with this illness, and it is leading him to his own doom whilst he is unaware of his illness, and neither does it ever cross his mind to seek a remedy for it. This is from the most extreme forms of general and specific punishments. Which punishment can be worse than disregarding your own self and squandering it, forgetting the matters that benefit it, forgetting its illness and cure and the reasons for its joy, success, uprightness and its eternal life in the permanent abode of bliss?

It would be clear to whoever thoroughly reflects on this point that most of mankind have truly forgotten themselves, squandered themselves and wasted their reward with Allāh. They sold it for a measly price in an inequitable transaction. This will all become clear to them at the time of death and will be made evidently clear on the day of (their) deprivation, on the day it will become clear to the servant that he has been tricked in the contract that he enacted with himself in this life and the transaction he partook in for his afterlife. Indeed, every individual commences a transaction in this life for the Hereafter.

The losers are those who believe that they are the recipients of the profits and numerous gains. They bought this life and its luxuries and pleasures in exchange for the Hereafter and its luxuries, so they exhausted their pleasures in their worldly life and enjoyed them, became satisfied with them and reassured therewith. Their endeavors were in pursuit of them. They sold, bought and traded. They sold something forthcoming (afterlife) for something instant (worldly life), something delayed for something immediate, they sold the unseen for something materialistic whilst declaring that this is something of firm resolve. One of them may even say:

Take what you see and leave something you heard about

They say: How can I forfeit something that is present and witnessed in this life for something that is unseen and has been postponed in another realm other than this one? Fused along with this is a weakness in faith, the strong driving force of desires, the love of the worldly life and the resemblance of its people.

Most of mankind are involved in this failing transaction that Allāh mentioned:

أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ٨٦

"Those are the ones who have bought the life of this world for the hereafter, so the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be aided." [al-Baqarah:86].

He also said about them:

أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلضَّلَـٰلَةَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَـٰرَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُهْتَدِينَ ١٦

"Their transaction has bought no profit, nor were they guided." [al-Baqarah:16].

Thus, when the day of deprivation arrives, the fraud of this transaction will become evidently clear to them and their souls will be broken with anguish therein.

As for those who have profited, they sold something that was fading in exchange for something permanent, something menial for something precious, something worthless for something imperial, and they declared: What is the value of this worldly life, from its ultimate beginning to end for us to sell our portion of reward with Allāh and the Hereafter for it? How would it then be when we consider the short period of time that an individual exists in it, which is like a moment in a dream and has no comparison in the least with a permanent abode?

Allāh said:

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ كَأَن لَّمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا۟ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّهَارِ يَتَعَارَفُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ ﴿٤٥﴾

"And on the Day when He will gather them, as if they had not remained in the world but an hour of a day, and they will know each other." [Yunus:45]

Allāh also said:

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَىٰهَا ﴿٤٢﴾ فِيمَ أَنتَ مِن ذِكْرَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٤﴾ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ
مُنذِرُ مَن يَخْشَىٰهَا ﴿٤٥﴾ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا۟ إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٤٦﴾

"They ask you about the Hour: when is its arrival? In what position are you that you should mention it? To you Lord is its conclusiveness. You are only a warner for those who fear it. It will be, on the day they see it as though they had not remained in the world except for an afternoon or a morning thereof." [An-Nazi'at:42-46]

Allāh also said:

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا۟ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

"It will be – on the day they see that which they are promised as though they had not remained in the world except an hour of a day." [al-Ahqaf:35]

Allāh said:

قَٰلَ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَسْـَٔلِ ٱلْعَآدِّينَ ﴿١١٣﴾ قَٰلَ إِن
لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۖ لَّوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

"How long did you remain on earth in number of years? They will say: 'We remained a day or part of a day, ask those who enumerate.' He will say: You stayed not but a little – if only you had known." [al-Mu'minūn:112-114]

This is the reality of the worldly life when brought forth on the Day of Resurrection. So when they realized the briefness of their stay in the worldly life and that they have a final abode to travel to, which is the eternal life, they deemed that it would be from the greatest injustices to trade an eternal abode for a fading life. Thus, they commenced a transaction of intellectuals and were not deceived by the transactions of the foolish ones, so their profits flourished on the Day of Judgment along with the amount they purchased. Every individual in this life is involved in selling, purchasing and trading, everyone starts their day as a vendor for their own soul either trading it to ruin or liberating it.

Allāh says:

۞إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةَ ۚ يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ
وَيُقْتَلُونَ ۖ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِۦ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَٱسْتَبْشِرُوا۟
بِبَيْعِكُمُ ٱلَّذِى بَايَعْتُم بِهِۦ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١١﴾

"Indeed, Allāh has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties in exchange for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allāh, so they kill and are killed. A true promise from Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'ān. And who is truer to his covenant than Allāh? So rejoice in your transaction that you have contracted. And it is that which is the great attainment." [At-Tawbah:111]

This is the first return for the price paid in this transaction, so trade off in vain, O' bankrupt ones! As for the one who is unable to pay this price, there is another price, so give this price if you are from those who are worthy of this transaction.

ٱلتَّـٰٓئِبُونَ ٱلْعَـٰبِدُونَ ٱلْحَـٰمِدُونَ ٱلسَّـٰٓئِحُونَ ٱلرَّٰكِعُونَ ٱلسَّـٰجِدُونَ ٱلْـَٔامِرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَٱلنَّاهُونَ
عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَٱلْحَـٰفِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

"Such as the repentant, the worshippers, the glorifiers of Allāh, the travelers for His cause, those who bow and prostrate in prayer, those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and those who observe the limits set by Allāh. Give glad tidings to the believers." [At-Tawbah:112]

Allāh said:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ هَلۡ أَدُلُّكُمۡ عَلَىٰ تِجَٰرَةٖ تُنجِيكُم مِّنۡ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٖ ١٠ تُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ
وَتُجَٰهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمۡوَٰلِكُمۡ وَأَنفُسِكُمۡۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ١١

"O you who have believed, shall I guide you to a transaction that will save you from a painful punishment? It is to believe in Allāh and His Messenger and strive in the cause of Allāh with your wealth and your lives. That is best for you, if you should know." [As-Saf:10-11]

The intent here is that sins cause a person to forget their portion from this profitable transaction and preoccupy him with a failing transaction, that is sufficient in itself as a punishment. And Allāh's aid is sought.

From the punishment of sins is: **They remove any present blessings and prevent the forthcoming ones.** They remove the present blessings and obstruct any forthcoming blessings. Indeed, the blessings of Allāh are not preserved with anything more effective than acts of obedience to Him, and the needed blessings are not gained by anything more effective than acts of obedience to Him. What is with Allāh can only be gained through obedience.

Allāh has decreed a cause and a preventative for everything. A cause that will attract and a preventative that will deny. He made the reason that attains His blessings his obedience, and the preventatives that are an obstruction to them are sins. Thus, if He desires the preservation of blessings over His servants, He inspires them to maintain them through using them in obedience to Him. However, if He wants to remove them from an individual, He abandons him until the person disobeys Him through them.

What is simply startling is that even though an individual may know this, and witness it upon himself and others and hear of the news of those whom he has not seen and how their blessings were stripped from them due to the sins, yet one continues to delve into the disobedience of Allāh as if he has exclusivity from this generality or that it is an event that occurs with others and reaches everyone in mankind except him!

What ignorance is more striking than this? What oppression to the soul is more exceeding than this?

Truly, the judgment is for Allāh *al-Alee, al-Kabīr* to make.

From the punishments of sins is: **They distance a servant from their ally**, and the most beneficial one to them amongst the creatures, the most sincere one towards him and the one whose closeness brings happiness, it is the Angel that has been assigned to you. Through sins, his enemy - who is the most deceitful and most harmful of creatures to him - draws closer, and he is the devil. Inevitably, if an individual disobeys Allāh, his Angel distances itself to the proportion of the sin to the extent it can distance itself a lengthy amount due to a lie the individual has told.

In some narrations that have been mentioned: "If an individual lies, the Angel distances itself a mile away from the stench."[1] If this is the distance an Angel flees to as a result of one lie, what then would be the distance from him due to something more severe and vile?

Some of the Pious Predecessors would say: "If a male mounts another male, the earth cries out to Allāh, the Angels flee towards their Lord and complain of the enormity of what they have seen."

Some of the Pious Predecessors also said: "When a person wakes up from their sleep, they are approached by an Angel and a devil. If the individual remembers Allāh, makes *Takbīr* (utters Allāh Akbar), *Taḥmid* (praises Allāh 'Alhamdullilah') and *Tahlīl* (utters the testimony of faith 'Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh'), the Angel banishes the devil and protects the individual. But if he begins his morning in another manner, the Angel disappears, and the devil assumes charge of the individual.

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [1972].

The Angel will continue to draw closer and closer to an individual until it gains dominance, authority and obedience. So the Angels are in support of this person in their life, during death and in resurrection, as Allāh said:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟
بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ﴿٣١﴾

"Indeed, those who have said 'Our Lord is Allāh' and then remained steadfast on the right path, the Angels will descend upon them [at the time of death] and say: 'Do not fear and do not grieve, but receive glad tidings of Paradise which you were promised. We are your allies in the worldly life and the Hereafter.'" [Fussilat:30-31]

If the Angel allies with an individual, then he has been allied with the purest creation, the most beneficial and the most loyal. Thus, the Angel gives him firm resolve, strength in the heart and support. Allāh said:

إِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ أَنِّى مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ﴿١٢﴾

"When your Lord inspired the angels, 'I am with you, so strengthen those who have believed.'" [al-Anfal:12]

The Angel also says to the believer at the moment of death, "Do not fear, do not grieve and embrace glad tidings of that which makes you happy." The Angel keeps him firm with the strong word at a time when the individual needs it most in this life, at the moment of death and in the grave during the questioning.

There is no companionship better for the servant than that of the Angels. He is his companion during the times he is awake, asleep, during his life, at the point of death, in his grave and his solace during his moments of desolation; he is his companion at times of seclusion and the one who shares his secrets. The Angel fights away his enemy, defends him, aids him against the enemy, promises the individual with good, gives him glad tidings and encourages him to testify the truth, as it has been reported in a narration that has been transmitted as attributed to the Prophet and otherwise: "Indeed, the Angel gathers around the heart of the offspring of Adam, and the devil gathers around the heart. The gathering of the Angel is to promise good and testify the promise, and the gathering of the devil is to promise evil and deny the truth."[1]

If the Angel draws exceedingly close to the servant, he begins to utter words on the tongue of this person and inspires the individual to say what is good. But if he distances from the individual, the devil comes close and utters words upon the tongue of the individual and places false testimony and vile speech through him until you find one of them uttering the words of an Angel whilst the other utter the words of a devil.

The narration states: "Reassurance resonates on the tongue of Umar."[2]

One would hear a good word from someone and say: Only an Angel would place this word on your tongue. He would hear the contrary and say: Only a devil would place this word on your tongue. The Angel plants the truth in the heart and reveals it on the tongue whilst the devil plants evil on the tongue and makes it run along the tongue.

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[1] At-Tirmidhī [2988]. Ibn Ḥibbān [997]

[2] This narration has been collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the virtues of the companions.

From the punishments of sins: **The distancing of the ally whose closeness, an adjacency and an alliance to him which contains his bliss.** Equally, it is from the punishments of sin for the enemy to draw near, whose presence and alliance only attracts wretchedness, doom and corruption. The Angel will even defend and protect an individual as well as reply on his behalf is someone is discourteous and foul-mouthed to him, just as it occurred when two men had a dispute in front of the Prophet. One of the men was insulting the other whilst the man on the receiving end remained quiet before he uttered one word in response, at which point the Prophet stood up and left. So the man said to the Prophet: "O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, when I partly responded you left." He replied: "The Angel was defending you, but when you responded, the devil took its place, and I would never have remained." [1] Furthermore, if a person makes a supplication for his or her fellow Muslim in their absence, the Angel says '*Amīn*' and says: "And unto you the same," and if an individual concludes the recitation of the opening chapter of the Qur'ān, the Angel says '*Amīn*' to the supplication within.

If a monotheistic believer and adherent follower of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet performs a sin, the Angels that hold the mighty Throne seek forgiveness for it on his behalf, and if he sleeps with an unbroken ablution, an Angel spends the night in his hair.

The Angel alongside a believer will respond on his behalf, fight for him, defend him, teach him, give him firmness in faith and support him. So it is not appropriate to treat the neighbor badly, or exceed in harming him, or banishing him or distancing him because he is an individual's guest and neighbor. Since honoring the guests from mankind and treating the neighbor well are all traits of faith within a person, what then do you think the case would be regarding the most noble of guests and the best neighbor and most faithful of them?

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[1] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [4896].

If an individual harms the Angel with the various forms of sins, oppression and immoralities, it will supplicate against him, and say: "Allāh, do not reward him with any good," just as it would supplicate for him if he honored it through obedience to Allāh and benevolence.

Some of the Companions would say: "With you is someone who is inseparable to you, so be shy from them and honor them."[1] There is no one more lowly than the one who does not shy from someone of nobility and high status, nor value him or respect him has misbehaved. Allāh has indicated this meaning in his statement:

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَٰفِظِينَ ۝١٠ كِرَامًا كَٰتِبِينَ ۝١١

"Indeed, appointed over you are keepers, Noble and recording." [al-Infitar:10-11]

Meaning: Be shy from these noble keepers, honor them, and value them in such regard that you would be embarrassed that they see you doing something you would be embarrassed to do in front of someone like yourselves.

The same things that annoy mankind annoy the Angels. So if an individual receives harm from the one who acts immorally and sins in front of them, even if he were to participate in the action, to what extent do you deem the harm would be for the noble and recording Angels?

From the punishments of sin is: **They attract the causes for an individual's devastation in his worldly and afterlife.**

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[1] Refer to At-Tirmidhī on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar [2800].

Sins are illness. Whenever they intensify and become engrained, they inevitably kill a person. Just as the body will not be healthy without the appropriate nutrition that preserves its strength and an outlet to release the unwanted mixtures and waste that would cause damage if they are combined and overwhelm, and an immune system that obstructs the intake of anything detrimental or something that may bring harm, likewise the heart; its life is not complete without the nourishment of faith and righteous actions to preserve its strength, and a sincere repentance that is an outlet for any harmful and unworthy substances, along with regimented diet that preserves sound health and dismisses anything that infringes on that and it is to abandon anything that conflicts with sound wellbeing. *Taqwá* (piety) is a word that encompasses all of the above; whatever deficiency there is in *Taqwá* shall be reflected in the above three aspects.

If this has become clear to you, you will realize that sins contradict the above three aspects. They attract the harmful substances; they necessitate a mixture of harmful substances to affect the regime and prevent any outlet of a sincere repentance.

Look at a body suffering with ailments whereby the harmful substances have accumulated along with the components of illness whilst he is unable to rid himself of them or prevent himself from receiving them, how would his health be? The poet said it well:

Your body that you have protected with a diet — in fear of a sudden illness

It would have been better if you sufficed — from sins in fear of the fire

Thus, whoever upholds their strength through observing the commands, uses the preventative measures in avoiding any sins and ridding himself of any unwanted elements through sincere repentance without leaving any good except that he tried to achieve or any evil except that he tried to avoid. And the aid is sought from Allāh.

The Legislated Punishments for Crimes

If the previously mentioned punishments do not frighten you and you find that they have not had any effect on your heart, then seek out your heart in the Islamic punishments that Allāh and His Messenger have legislated for crimes, such as the amputation of the hand for theft, or the hand and the foot highway robbery from anyone whose wealth and blood has sanctity. Flogging for slandering someone who is chaste with the accusation of fornication, or the consumption of alcohol. The stoning for adultery, or the lesser punishment of one hundred lashes and banishment from his own land to a foreign one for the unmarried fornicator. Or capital punishment for the act of incest, or the rejection of the prayer, or the belief or utterance of unbelief.

Reflect over the perfect Wisdom of Allāh in incapacitating the limb that was directly used to perform the crime. He disabled the hand and the arm of the highway robber, as they were the two limbs that he used in the crime, but He did not establish the punishment of the tongue with regards to the one who accuses the chaste one of fornication, as that would be an exceedingly unfair punishment. Instead, He sufficed him with a flogging that would cause pain across the body.

If it is said: Why has not the limb that directly committed the fornication been chastised? We may respond from various perspectives:

The first: The harm that the limb would receive would exceed the harm caused by the crime, as it consists of a cessation to lineage and the person being subject to fatality.

Secondly: The limb used to perform this crime is concealed and severing it would not serve the purpose of the punishment which is to deter and admonish others from committing the same crime, as opposed to the amputation of the hand.

Thirdly: If one of his hands is amputated, he still has another one to compensate for it, as opposed to the private part.

Fourthly: The pleasure experienced through fornication is felt by the entire body. Thus, it would only be befitting for the punishment to be felt by the entire body, which is more appropriate than specifying the punishment to part of the body.

Hence, the legislated punishments have been prescribed to the most adequate level, the most agreeable to the sound mind and the most appropriate for the overall benefit.

The intent here is to define that the crimes and sins warrant punishments that are divided into two categories that are either legislated in this life (*Shar'īyah*) or the Hereafter (*Qadarīyah*).

The Punishments of Sin Are Two Types

They are either '*Shar'īyah*', and they apply to the worldly life or '*Qadarīyah*', which apply to the Hereafter. If the *Shar'īyah* types are established, the *Qadarīyah* types are lifted or lessened. However, the Lord may seldom combine between both types of punishments and establish them on an individual, unless the punishment in this life has not been established to an adequate level whereby the sin has not been eradicated and it has not been enough to remove the illness.

However, if the one in the worldly life has failed to be established, the punishment in the Hereafter may be applied, and it may be sterner than the one an individual would have received in the worldly life, or it may be lighter, but it will encompass many others, whereas the *Shar'īyah* punishment in the worldly life is specific to the perpetrator. The Lord will never decree a legislated punishment in this life on anyone other than the perpetrator or those who aided and abetted. As for the *Qadarīyah* type in the Hereafter, it is both general and specific because the sin only affects its perpetrator if it is concealed. However, it harms the masses if it becomes overt and if the people witness evil and collectively decide not to denounce it, they would be on the verge of all being engulfed by the punishment of Allāh.

We have previously mentioned that Allāh has legislated the punishments within this life according to the scope of the sin and the appeal it has towards what is natural, and He divided it into three categories: capital punishment, amputation and flogging. He declared the capital punishment in line with blasphemy and anything equivalent to it or near it such as adultery and sodomy, as this all desecrates the religions and creeds and abolishes lineages and the nature of mankind.

Al-Imām Aḥmad said: "I do not know of any sin after murder that is worse than fornication." The Imām derived a narration of the Prophet on the authority of Abdullah bin Mas'ūd as proof for this, whereby he said: "O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, what is the worst sin?' He said: 'That you make an equal to Allāh, while it is He who created you.' He said: 'I said: Then what?' He said: 'That you kill your child fearing that he will eat with you [due to a fear of poverty].' He said: 'I said: Then what?' He said: 'That you commit adultery with your neighbor's wife.'" Then Allāh revealed the verse:

وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِي حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا
يَزْنُونَ ۝٦٨

"And those who do not invoke with Allāh another deity, nor kill the soul which Allāh has forbidden, except by right and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse." [al-Furqan:68][1]

In this particular piece of revelation, the Prophet mentioned the highest form of each sin so that his answer conforms to the question and answers it satisfactorily. The questioner enquired about the worst sin, and so the Prophet responded by informing him of the worst type of sin along with the worst form within its type.

The worst form of polytheism is to equate a partner to Allāh when it is He Who created you.

The worst form of murder is to kill your own child in the fear that they will share your food and drink alongside you (in fear of poverty).

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Exegesis, Chapter: The Statement of Allāh "Do not make partners with Allāh, whilst you know" [4477]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Faith, Chapter: Polytheism Is the Worst Sin [86].

The worst form of unlawful sexual intercourse is to commit fornication with your neighbor's wife, as the evil of this unlawful act accumulates depending on the magnitude of the honor and right that has been violated. Thus, committing fornication with a woman who is married carries a greater sin and punishment than committing the same act with an unmarried woman. As it entails a violation of the sanctity of the spouse, a corruption to the relationship, and an ascription of a bloodline that may not be from him and other than that from the aspects of harm. Therefore, it is a worse sin and crime than the fornication committed with one who is unmarried. If the woman's spouse is a neighbor to the one who perpetrated the crime, this sin is now accumulated to a further sin of the mistreatment of the neighbor with the highest form of harm and evil towards the neighbor. The following statement of the Prophet has been authentically attributed to him in which he says: "He will not enter Paradise, he whose neighbor is not secure from his wrongful conduct."[1] There is not a more evil harm than committing intercourse with someone else's wife. Fornication committed one hundred times is of a lesser degree to Allāh (without trivializing the matter) than fornicating with a neighbor's wife, and if the neighbor is the perpetrator's brother or relative, a further sin of breaking the ties of kinship is added to the enormity of the sin.

In addition, if the neighbor is absent in the fulfillment of an act of obedience to Allāh or performing the prayer, or in pursuit of knowledge or fighting in the cause of Allāh, the sin further magnifies to the extent that the one who performed this vile act with the wife of a man who is on duty fighting in the cause of Allāh, he shall face him on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be announced: "Take as much as you want from the sinner's good deeds for yourself." The Prophet said: "What do you think?"[1] i.e., what do think he will leave from the good deeds? He has been given authority to take whatever he wills on an occasion in which he will be in dire need for even one good deed, in a time wherein the father will not leave anything for his son, nor will a friend leave anything for his friend from any rights that are due to them.

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[1] Collected by Muslim in the Book of Faith, Chapter: Clarifying the Impermissibility of Harming the Neighbor [46].

If the woman he has committed this act with is a relative, the sin of severing the ties of kinship has added to its gravity and if the man himself is also married to another woman, the sin is even far worse, and if he is an elderly man who committed this sin, then the sin is even greater than previously deemed. Undoubtedly, they are from the three types of people whom Allāh shall not address on the Day of Resurrection nor purify, and they shall taste a painful torment.

Furthermore, if this act corresponds to a sacred month, or takes place in a sacred land or during a significant and honorable time of the day such as the time for prayer, or the prescribed times of response to the supplications, the sin is considered more vile by Allāh, and the offence is multiplied.

According to the above, consider the wickedness of sins and the compounded repercussions of sins and punishments from them. Allāh's aid is sought.

Allāh has legislated that the amputation of the hand be a punishment for the crime of stealing wealth that has been safeguarded. He is unable to obtain it hence he does so covertly by penetrating through walls and climbing over gates. He is like a feline or a snake that approaches you off-guard. Nonetheless, his crime does not amount to murder, nor does flogging deter it, so the best deterrent would be separating the body part that the thief uses to embark on the crime.

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[1] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Rule, Chapter: The Sanctity of the Wives of the Fighters in the Cause of Allāh [1897] on the authority of Burayda.

He made flogging a reprimand for the crimes that spoil the minds and violate the people's honor by falsely accusing and maligning them of unlawful sexual intercourse. And so, the legislated punishments of Allāh in this life are categorized in these three types just as the expiations revolve around three types: Emancipation that is the highest, feeding others and fasting. Allāh also categorized the sins to be three types:

A category that warrants a penalty, and this category does not include an expiatory act because of the sufficiency of the penalty.

Another category that does not carry a penalty, so there are acts of expiation one can perform. Such sins like performing sexual intercourse with a spouse during the fast on a day in the month of Ramadan, or during *Ihram* (whilst in the state of Ihram during Hajj or 'Umrah), during a period of *Zihār,* for accidental causing of death, violating an oath and other actions.

There is a further category that does not require a legal punishment or an act of expiation, and it is two types:

One: The type wherein the deterrent is instilled within innate nature such as eating excrement or consuming urine or blood.

Second: The type of sin that has a lesser detrimental effect than the acts that carry a penalty, such as casting a look at something forbidden, kissing, touching, conversing or stealing some pennies and the like.

The expiations have been legislated in relation to three types of sin:

One: An act that is principally lawful, but an unlawful act has intervened, and thus the individual performs this act in an unlawful manner, such as having intimacy with one's spouse during *Ihram* on the pilgrimage of Hajj or 'Umrah or performing sexual intercourse with one's spouse during her menses, as opposed to the penetration through the backside which is forbidden at all times. Hence, the attachment that some of the scholars of jurisprudence have made between the two acts is incorrect in this regard, because it has been made impermissible in all its forms, and it is analogous to sodomy and consuming intoxicants.

Second: Vows or oaths made in Name of the Allāh or something made unlawful by Allāh (through a person's oath) for someone. If someone wishes to dissolve this oath, it can be done through expiation, and it has been named 'Tahilla'.

Third: The type that requires a compensatory measure, such as the measures taken after accidental causing of death, or accidental death caused to hunted prey. Such are from the remedial compensatory expiations. The first type mentioned above is a form of chastisement, and the second is to dissolve the oath.

A legislated penalty and reprimand will never be combined together as a punishment to a sin. If the sin requires the establishment of a penalty, that is sufficient, or else the reprimand should suffice. Both are never implemented together. Any sin that warrants a penalty will not carry an expiation, and the opposite is also correct.

However, are both reprimand and acts of expiation ever required for a sin that does not carry a penalty? There are two points of view in this regard. It may apply to acts such as performing sexual intercourse with your spouse during the state of *Ihram* or fasting, or with a menstruating woman (spouse). If one were to say that expiation here applies, then it could also be said that the perpetrator should be reprimanded for violating the sanctity of honor by performing this crime.

On the other hand, it may also be said that there is no need for reprimand due to the act of expiation being sufficient, because it compensates for the deficiency and eradicates it.

The Punishments of the Hereafter Are Two Types

A type that afflicts the hearts and the souls and another type that affects the body and worldly possessions.

The type that affects the heart is further divided into two types:

One: A pain that the heart feels.

Two: Cutting the elements that give it its life and welfare, whereby if they are cut away, the heart is affected with adverse effects.

The punishment on the heart is the more severe of the two, and it is the root for the punishment on the body. This particular punishment gains strength until it seeps through onto the body just as the pains of the body creep into the heart. When the soul is detached from the body, the two affairs remain connected, and thereafter the punishment of the heart becomes prevalent and the suffering becomes more apparent, which is actualized and known as the punishment of the grave. So it is connected to the life of the grave just as the bodies are connected to this worldly life.

The other type of punishment on the body is also divided into two categories. A type in the worldly life and a type in the Hereafter, and their severity and continuity are in accordance with the ills that occurred from the sin. All root evil in this life and the next is from sin and their punishments, evil 'shar' is a generic term for all of it. It roots from the evil of a soul and bad actions, and they are the two things that the Prophet would seek refuge from in the introduction of any address he would make: "We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our souls and our bad actions." Bad actions emanate from the evil nature of a soul; thus, the root cause of evil is from the evil of the soul, whilst the actions are the branches and the results.

There are varying opinions regarding the statement of the Prophet: "From the evil of our own deeds." Does it mean the evil actions themselves, in which case would be considered as attributing a type of action to its generic form? Or is it as others have said that the refuge is sought from the evil consequences; in other words, the punishments of our actions that will harm us.

This statement is validated because the refuge being sought includes every form of evil, as the evil of the souls necessitate the practice of bad actions, and the bad actions are a cause for punishment. Therefore, he mentioned the evil of the souls due to what this consists of from despicable actions and suffices with that as it is the root cause. Then he mentioned the end result of this evil, which are the bad actions that carry the negative outcome of punishment and pain. Thus, this supplication in seeking refuge includes refuge being sought from the root of the evil, its branches, its end result and whatever it necessitates.

Among the supplications of the Angels for the believers is:

وَقِهِمُ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِۚ وَمَن تَقِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ يَوۡمَئِذٖ فَقَدۡ رَحِمۡتَهُۥۚ ٩

"And protect them from the evil consequences of their deeds, and whoever You protect from evil consequences that day – You will have given him mercy." [Ghafir:9]

This invocation necessitates a request that they are protected from the evil actions and their consequences that are a harm to the individual, since the person is protected from the evil consequences if he is protected from the evil actions:

"And protect them from evil consequences that day – You will have given him mercy," is in reference to the punishments from those actions on that day.

If it is said: They asked Allāh that the believers be protected from the punishment of the Hellfire, so it has been implied that the evil that is in question here is the evil actions themselves, and the request of the Angels is equivalent to the request for refuge made by the Prophet. So the statement of **"that day"** does not rebuke this understanding because the objective is to prevent the evil consequences of the actions from taking place on that day.

In addition, the protection from the consequence of sins is of two types. Firstly: A prevention that occurred by the sole guidance and success granted by Allāh without being initiated by the individual. Secondly: A prevention in the form of forgiveness, and so the perpetrator is not punished for it. Thus, this verse consists of a request for two affairs whilst it is conditional from a linguistic perspective.

Reflect on this realty of the Angels in their praise for being of the believing creatures, performing righteous deeds, and being benevolent to the believers by seeking forgiveness for them. They preceded their request for forgiveness by an intercession to Allāh through mentioning His Perfect Knowledge and Mercy.

His Perfect Knowledge holds the knowledge of their sins and their causes, their lack of infallibility, the overwhelming authority of their enemies and their souls and their whims and innate nature, the things that have been beautified for them in this worldly life and its pleasures. His Knowledge also consists of their makeup being from the earth and their condition within their mother's wombs. He knows by His Infinite Knowledge that they will inevitably disobey Him, and that He loves to pardon and forgive and other than that from His Perfect Knowledge that none other than Him can ever comprehend.

His Perfect Mercy necessitates that He shall never destroy anyone of the believers in Him from the people of monotheistic belief and those who truly love Him. Indeed, His Mercy is infinite, none are excluded from His Mercy apart from the wretched, and there is none more wretched than those who have not been included in His Mercy that has encompassed everything.

Thereafter, the Angels asked the Lord to forgive the repentant ones who adhered to His straight path – it is the path that leads to Him that is knowing, loving and obeying Him. They repented from whatever He dislikes and followed the path He loves.

After that they asked Him to protect them from the torment of the Hellfire and to admit them alongside the believers and their near relatives and spouses into eternal Paradise that He promised them. Even though Allāh never fails to deliver His promise, He promised them this Paradise after the fulfillment of various causes. From them: The supplication of the Angels to admit them into Paradise by His mercy, so He entered them into it by His mercy which includes His granting of success to them to fulfill the necessary good actions to enter, and He made the Angels supplicate for their admittance.

Then, Allāh mentioned that the Angels concluded this invocation by saying "**Indeed, You are *al-Azīz al-Hakīm,*"** i.e., the source, the reason and the perfection of all of the above originates from His Perfect Ability and Knowledge. *Iza* (the attribute from the Name al-Azīz) indicates His Perfect Ability, and *Hikmah* (the attribute from the Name al-Hakīm) indicates His Perfect Knowledge. By these two attributes, Allāh decrees whatever He wills, commands and prohibits and rewards and punishes and the creation, and His commands all come from the two attributes.

The intent here is that the punishments for sins vary between punishments in this life and those in the next. Both punishments are either inflicted on the heart or the body or both, and there are punishments in the grave after death and punishments on the Day of Resurrection.

Therefore, sin is never devoid of a punishment, but due to the ignorance of an individual, he may not notice the punishment he is experiencing because he is like the drunk one and the drugged or the sleeping one who does not feel pain. However, when he awakes or regains consciousness, he will feel the pains. The relationship of punishments to sins is like that of combustion to fire, a fracture to demolition, drowning to water, the damage the body receives from poison and illnesses to their causes.

Furthermore, this harm could happen as an immediate consequence to the sin, or it could be delayed slightly or for a longer period of time, just as an illness could show immediate consequences or could fail to appear immediately after its causes have happened. This mistake happens frequently in this scenario. Someone may perform a sin and not see its effects immediately but remains unaware that it is affecting him gradually, just as poisons and harmful substances affect the body. Either the individual attains the necessary medicines, has an output for the illness and a system to curb it, or he is on route to destruction. This is in the case of one sin that the individual has failed to conquer by eradicating it and its effects, so what about sin after sin being perpetrated daily and in every hour? Allāh's aid is sought.

Recollect the Punishments That Allāh Has Set for Sins

One must recall the punishments that have been set by Allāh as a punishment for perpetrating sins. Consider some of them touching you and make this a motive for the soul to abandon all sin. Here I shall list a few that should suffice the intellectual and truthful one.

From it: A seal placed on the heart and the hearing, a veil over the sight, a lock on the heart and a shield over it, a covering and a seal over the heart, turning away the hearts and the eyes, an intervention between the individual and his heart, heedlessness from remembering Allāh, forgetting oneself, forsaking the need for Allāh to purify your heart, the chest feeling constricted as if it is rising into the sky, diverting the hearts from the truth, increasing to its illness, falling back into error. As al-Imām Aḥmad mentioned on the authority of Ḥudhayfah bin al-Yaman –Allāh be pleased with him- who said: "The hearts are four: A heart that is pure with a lantern that radiates, that is the heart of the believer. A heart that is sealed, that is the heart of the disbeliever. A heart that is inverted, that is the heart of the hypocrite and a heart that is fueled by two components – the component of faith and the component of hypocrisy, and the heart resembles whichever component overrides the other."

Also, from the punishments is the discouraging nature and idleness towards the obedience of Allāh.

From the punishments is the heart becoming deaf, unable to hear the truth. Dumb, unable to speak the truth and blind, unable to see. Thus, the relationship between his heart and the truth that is of no benefit to him is like the relationship between the deaf ear and sounds, or a blind eye and colors or a tongue that cannot pronounce and speech. Through this, it is known that this deafness, dumbness and blindness is attributed to the heart itself in its essence, whereas the limbs follow accordingly. Allāh says:

فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعۡمَى ٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرُ وَلَٰكِن تَعۡمَى ٱلۡقُلُوبُ ٱلَّتِي فِي ٱلصُّدُورِ ٤٦

"For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts that are within the breasts." [al-Hajj:46]

The meaning behind this is not the blindness of the eyesight, how could that ever be the case when Allāh has said:

لَّيۡسَ عَلَى ٱلۡأَعۡمَىٰ حَرَجٞ ٦١

"There isn't constraint on the blind one," [al-Nur:61] and He said:

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰٓ ١ أَن جَآءَهُ ٱلۡأَعۡمَىٰ ٢

"The Prophet frowned and turned away. When there came to him the blind man." [Abasa:1-2]

However, the meaning is that true and complete blindness is the blindness of the heart, to the extent that the blindness of the eyes may be disregarded in comparison to it or to the point that it may be completely ignored due to the strength of the heart, as the Prophet highlights in other examples that the reality of an affair may not be as many people deem: "The strong man is not one who is good at wrestling, but the strong man is the one who controls himself in a fit of rage."[1] And his statement: "The poor man is not the one who goes round to the people and is dismissed with one or two morsels, and one or two dates. The poor one is he who does not ask the people and is not noticed for charity to be given to him."[1] There are many similar pieces of text.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Manners, Chapter: Beware of Being Angry

The intended meaning of all this is that from the punishment of a sin is the heart becoming blind, deaf and dumb.

From them is the sinking of the heart, just as a particular location can sink along with everything on it, dropping it to the deepest depths whilst the person may be unaware. The sign of this is that the individual remains wandering in close proximity of things that are debased, filthy and low, just as the heart that Allāh has raised and drawn close to Him on the other hand continues to wander around righteousness, goodness and dignified actions, statements and manners.

Some of the Pious Predecessors would say: "These hearts wander, some of them wander around the mighty Throne and others wander around the bushes."

Also, from the punishments is the disfigurement of the heart, just as the image can be disfigured making the heart resemble the heart of the beast that he has resembled in his manners, actions and innate nature. Some hearts become disfigured to resemble the manners of a pig due to the intense resemblance of the individual to it. Some of them resemble the mannerisms of a dog or a donkey or a snake or a scorpion or other than that.

In fact, this is the explanation of Sufyan bin Uyaynah to the statement of Allāh:

[6114]. Also collected by Muslim [2609].

[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Zakat, Chapter of: "They do not ask the people" [1479]. Also collected in Muslim in the Book of Zakat, Chapter: The Poor Person Who Does Not Have Enough [1039].

وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَٰٓئِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّآ أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُم ۚ ﴿٣٨﴾

"There is not a creature on the earth nor a bird that flies with its wings except that they are communities like you." [al-An'ām:38]

He said: "Some resemble a predator, some carry the traits of dogs or pigs or donkeys. Others flaunt themselves in their garments as the peacock flaunts itself in its feathers, others are unintellectual like the donkey and some overestimate themselves like the rooster, others are as friendly as the pigeon and easy to get along with whilst others hold grudges like the camel, some are all good like the goat, some resemble wolves and some are as deceptive as the fox'.

Allāh has resembled the ignorant and deviant ones with the donkeys at times, with dogs at times and with livestock at other times. This resemblance develops itself in the inner-self until it appears faintly in the open by those who scrutinize their state, and it continues to appear in the actions of an individual until it is seen by all. The resemblance continues to strengthen until it matches the image until it becomes blatantly clear by the permission of Allāh. It is the complete disfigurement whereby Allāh transforms the outer appearance to resemble the animal itself, as he did with the Jews and their likes and as He will do with a group from this nation into apes and pigs. *Subhan Allāh!* How many hearts have been turned away whilst the individual has not realized! How many hearts have been disfigured or sunk to a deep depth, yet the individual is unaware! And how many have been trialed by the praise of the people for them, deluded by the concealment of Allāh of their sins and allured by the blessings of Allāh on them! All of which are forms of punishments and belittlement whilst the ignorant one deems them to be honor.

Also, from the punishments is the plan of Allāh against the evil plotter, and the misleading of the deceptive one, the mockery of the one who mocks and the misguidance of the one who digresses from the truth.

From them also is the misguidance of the heart until it begins to see the falsehood as truth and the truth as falsehood, the good as evil and the evil as good, he corrupts but he thinks he is rectifying, obstructing the path to Allāh whilst thinking he is calling to it, exchanging guidance for falsehood whilst thinking he is upon guidance and following his own desires yet claiming to be obedience to his Master (Allāh). All of the above are punishments afflicted on the heart.

Among them also is the veil over the heart from the Lord in this life and the greatest veil on the Day of Resurrection, as Allāh said:

كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

"No! Rather the veil has covered their hearts of that which they were earning. No! Indeed, from their Lord on that day they shall be partitioned." [al-Mutafifin:14,15]

Sins prevented them from crossing the passage over to their hearts so that they can know what will be of benefit to them and what will purify them, what will corrupt them and what will make them wretched. They were prevented from crossing the distance between their hearts and their Lord so that the hearts can reach Him, triumph in victory and receive His honor, receiving the eyes delight and the pleasure of the soul. Moreover, their sins were a veil between them and their own hearts and a veil between them and their Creator.

Also: A miserable life in this life and in the grave and in the Hereafter, he will be subject to the torment. Allāh said:

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِى فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ أَعْمَىٰ ﴿١٢٤﴾

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance shall have a miserable life, and We will gather him on the day of resurrection blind." [Ta Ha:124]

This miserable life has been explained as the punishment of the grave, there is no doubt that it is from it and the verse entails what is even more general. The context of the verse affirms something that is unspecified, as Allāh has decreed that a miserable life comes as a consequence to diverting from His remembrance. The one who diverts from His remembrance shall experience a miserable life proportionate to their digression, even if they experience abundant blessing of the worldly life, in his heart will remain a feeling of desolation, humiliation and sorrow that breaks the heart and crushes the false hopes and torments under the guise of the intoxication of desires, lusts and an infatuation with the worldly life and leadership, if not coupled with the intoxication of alcohol! The intoxication of these affairs is more severe than the intoxication of alcohol because one can wake up and come to their senses with alcohol, but the intoxication of desires and an infatuation for the worldly life are seldom woken from until the person dies. Living through a miserable life is something inevitable in this life, the grave and the Hereafter for the one who digresses from the remembrance of Allāh. The eye will not find its delight, the heart will not find peace and the soul will not be reassured except by way of its Lord Who is the Only One worshipped in truth and every other deity worshipped besides Him is false. Whoever is delighted with Allāh shall be a source of joy for others, but whoever is not in this state of delight will find their heart torn apart in regret. Allāh has declared that the pleasant life will be given to those who believe in Him and do righteous deeds, as Allāh said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم
بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer – We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward according to the best of what they used to do." [An-Nahl:97]

According to this, He has guaranteed the recompense of a good life in this world to the faithful who perform good actions and with Paradise in the Hereafter, so they experience the best of both lives and they are full of life in both abodes.

Equal to this is the other statement of Allāh:

۞ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۚ وَلَدَارُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ ۚ وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

"For those who do good in this world is good, and the home of the Hereafter is better – and how excellent is the home of the righteous." [An-Nahl:30]

And:

وَأَنِ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ يُمَتِّعْكُم مَّتَٰعًا حَسَنًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَيُؤْتِ كُلَّ ذِى
فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُۥ ۖ ﴿٣﴾

"Seek forgiveness of your Lord and repent to Him, He will let you enjoy a good provision for a specified term and give every doer of good from his favor." [Hud:3]

It is evident that the pious, the doers of good have triumphed with the good of this worldly life and the Hereafter, they attained a pleasant life in both abodes as the pleasure of the soul, its joy, bliss, delight, reassurance, comfort, light, and wellbeing compared to the unlawful desires and deceitful doubts is the true happiness and the pleasure restricted to the body is incomparable to it. Some of those who felt this pleasure would say: "If the kings and the offspring of the kings knew the feelings we experience, they would have fought us for it with their swords."

Others would say: "Indeed, the heart experiences moments wherein I say: 'If the people of Paradise feel this way, they are surely experiencing a pleasant life.'"

Others would say: "In this life there is a paradise. It is like a paradise in the worldly life, and whoever enters it here enters the Paradise in the Hereafter, and whoever does not enter it here, will not enter the Paradise of the Hereafter."

Furthermore, the Prophet made an indication to this paradise in his statement: "If you pass by the gardens of Paradise, sit in them." The Companions asked: "What are the gardens of Paradise?" He replied: "The gatherings of knowledge [remembrance]." [1] He also said: "Between my home and pulpit is a garden from the gardens of Paradise."[2]

Do not assume that the statement of Allāh:

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [3510]. Also collected by al-Imām Aḥmad 3/150 [12545].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of the Virtue of Praying in the Two Mosques of Makkah and Madinah, chapter: The Virtue of the Position Between the Grave and the Pulpit [1195]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Hajj, Chapter: Between the Grave and the Pulpit [1390,1391].

إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِنَّ ٱلْفُجَّارَ لَفِى جَحِيمٍ ﴿١٤﴾

"Indeed, the righteous will be in pleasure. And indeed, the wicked will be in the Hellfire." [al-Infitar:13,14] is solely in reference to the Day of Judgment, rather it refers to all three abodes. Which pleasantry is better than the righteousness and comfort of the heart? The knowledge of the Lord, loving Him and complying with His commands? And is there any other life in reality worth living other than the one with a sound heart?

Allāh commended His dear ally for having a sound heart by saying:

وَإِنَّ مِن شِيعَتِهِ لَإِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٨٣﴾ إِذْ جَاءَ رَبَّهُ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٤﴾

"And indeed among his kind was Ibrahim [Abraham]. When he came to His Lord with a sound heart." [As-Saffat:83-84]

And Allāh also mentioned that he said:

يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

"The day when there will be no benefit from wealth or children. But only one who comes to Allāh with a sound heart." [Ash-Shu'raa:88,89]

The sound heart is the one that is free of polytheism, malice, spite, envy, greed, arrogance and an infatuation for the worldly life and leadership in it. Safe from any illness that distances him from Allāh, any doubt that conflicts with the revelation, any desire that conflicts with His command, any intent that conflicts with the Lord's orders and anything else that severs the ties between him and his Lord. This is the sound heart that lives in a current paradise and it will live through a paradise in the grave and in the paradise on the final day.

The Soundness of the Heart Is Not Complete Unless It Is Safe from Five Things

The soundness of the heart is by no means attained until it is safe from five things: polytheism that conflicts with monotheism, innovation that opposes *Sunnah,* whims that conflict with the commands, heedlessness that conflicts with remembrance and desires that contradict sincerity. These five are a veil between them and Allāh, and each one represents a multitude of its kind.

Therefore, the need or rather the necessity for the servant to ask Allāh to guide him to the straight path is extreme. The servant is not in need of anything more than a response to this request and there is nothing more beneficial to him than it. The straight path entails knowledge and constantly implementing or relinquishing apparent or inner actions. An individual may know the details of this straight path or may not or whatever is unknown could outweigh what is known. Also, he may be able to implement what he knows or possibly not, yet it is from the straight path even if he is incapable of doing it. He may want the actions he is able to implement, or he may not want it out of laziness, carelessness or another preventative reason. You may implement the thing you want, or you may not. You may include the conditions of sincerity in the things you implement, or you may not. From the things that you implement with sincerity, you may achieve the adherence to the *Sunnah,* or you may not. You may remain firm upon whatever you implement with this adherence or you may deviate from it.

All of this transpires and is reality amongst the creatures whether in excess or scarcity.

This is not something that people will incline to if left to their own devices; rather, whenever someone is left to solely depend on themselves, there will be an obstacle between the above and himself. This is the rejection that the hypocrites fell into due to their sins, Allāh left them to themselves and their original state of oppression and ignorance.

The Meaning of 'The Lord Is on the Straight Path'

The Lord Most High is on the straight path in His commands and decree, prohibitions and orders and guides whoever He wills to His straight path from His virtue, mercy and blesses a person with guidance so that he may be righteous, and diverts whoever He wills from His straight path from His justice and wisdom due to the lack of suitability of the individual, which is a required factor in being upon the straight path. So He is on the straight path and has set a straight path for His servants to adhere to and invited them to it as a proof and just measure, then He guided whomever He wills to adhere to it as a favor and virtue from Him without exiting from it due to His justice and virtue. On the Day of Judgment, He will set a straight and narrow path that takes them to His paradise, but He will divert those whom he diverted in the worldly life from it and allow those who were on the straight path in the worldly life to remain firm on it. He will make the light of belief that His servants had in Him, His Messenger and His revelation into a tangible light that will appear before them, one that they will be guided with through the darkness of that path on the Day of Judgment. However, He will maintain their light for them until they cross it, just as He maintained their faith until they met Him. He will extinguish the light of the hypocrites at a time they will need it most, just as He extinguished it for them in the worldly life. The actions of the sinners will become prevalent through the hooks on the sides of this path that will snatch them, just as they were snatched from the path of steadfastness in the worldly life and made the speed by which they traverse this path proportionate to their actions in the worldly life. He further set a lake for the believers which they shall drink from, proportionate to the portion from His legislation they adhered to. On the other hand, He denied a drink to anyone who failed to drink from His legislation and religion in the worldly life.

Look at the Hereafter as if you see it with your own two eyes and ponder over the perfect Wisdom of Allāh in both abodes, and you will surely come to know without doubt that the worldly life is a plantation for the Hereafter and it is an introduction and an example, and that the levels of the people in the Hereafter with regards to the joy or torment they will receive are determined through their levels in this worldly life as it relates to their faith, righteous actions or the opposite. Allāh grants success.

From the most severe punishments for a sin is exiting this straight path in this life and the Hereafter.

The Contrast in Punishments Depends on the Contrast Between the Sins

Since the sins vary in severity and detriment, it is also the case that the punishments in this life and the Hereafter vary accordingly. By assistance from Allāh, we shall proceed in mentioning here a concise segment in this regard.

I say: These punishments originate from two things: abandoning a command or partaking in a prohibition; hence, that are the two sins that Allāh trialed the mother and father of all mankind and jinn-kind. Both are divided in consideration of their place, whether it is apparent on the limbs or inward upon the heart. They are further divided depending on their connection with the right that must be delivered to Allāh or the rights of the creatures, even though every right of the creatures includes a right to the Creator but was simply referred to as the right of the creation because it must be afforded upon their request and is waived off if they request as much.

Sins Fall into Four Categories

Thereafter, sins are divided into four categories: authoritarian, devilish, predatory and animalistic, and they do not escape from being any of these four.

The authoritarian sins: To undertake some of the attributes that do not suit him from the attributes of Lordship such as grandeur, self-glory, supremacy, invincibility, sublimity, enslavement of the creation and the likes. Polytheism is also included in this category and is of two types: polytheism in the Names and Attributes of Allāh and worship of another deity besides Allāh. The second type is a lesser polytheism in the actions that may not warrant an eternal existence in the Hellfire but will cause the action it appears in to be null and void, and this category of sin is the most perilous. It also includes speaking about Allāh without correct knowledge about His creation and His Words. Thus, whoever is a perpetrator of these kinds of sins is challenging Allāh in His Lordship and Sovereignty and has set a false partner alongside Him. This is the gravest sin with Allāh that no action can avail alongside it.

As for the devilish type of sin, it is to undertake a resemblance to the devil in envy, transgression, deceit, harboring grudges, betrayal, conniving, ordering and beautifying disobedience to Allāh, forbidding obedience to Him and merging the two whilst innovating into the religion and inviting to innovation and misguidance. This kind tails the first kind in its detriment even though this one is of a lesser degree.

As for the predatory kind, they are the sins of transgression, anger, spilling of blood, taking advantage of the weak and the incapable. This type of sin gives birth to various forms of inhumane harms and the audacity to commit oppression and offence.

As for the animalistic kind: They are like greed and an eager determination and diligence to fulfill the desire of the stomach and the sexual organs. From which fornication arises, theft, unlawful consumption of orphan's wealth, miserliness, gluttony, cowardice, unrest, and impatience and other than that. This segment portrays the majority of the sins amongst the creation due to their inability to fulfill the predatory and authoritarian sins through which they find an opening into the rest of the categories. Thus, it reins them in and they enter the predatory sins followed by the devilish ones, then onto challenging for Lordship and polytheism. So whoever contemplates on this adequately will realize that sins are a gateway to polytheism, unbelief and challenging Allāh in His Lordship.

Sins are Major and Lesser Than the Major

The Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* and the consensus of the Companions of the Prophet and their pious successors and the leading scholars of Islām have all evidently shown that sins are divided into major and those lesser that that. Allāh said:

إِن تَجْتَنِبُواْ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾

"And if you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins." [An-Nisa:31]

الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ

Allāh also said: "Those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, only committed lesser ones." [An-Najm:32]

Also in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, he reported that the Prophet said: "The five daily prayers, Friday prayer to Friday prayer, and Ramadan to Ramadan are expiations to what occurred between them if the major sins have been avoided."[1]

These actions of expiation are spread across three levels:

One: A type that fall short in expiating the lesser sins due to their inadequacy, lack of sincerity and fulfillment of the necessary tenants in the action in the same fashion that the weak medicine falls short in dosage and method of administration in remedying the illness.

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[1] Also collected by Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurairah in the Book of Purification, Chapter: The Five Daily Prayers [233].

Two: They battle against the lesser sins but do not become strong enough to expiate the major sins.

Three: They are strong enough to expiate the lesser sins but have an extra strength used to expiate some of the major sins.

Reflect over this, because it will eradicate many problems you may have.

It has been recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim[1] that the Prophet said: "Should I not inform you of the largest major sin?" We said: "Inform us, Messenger of Allāh ﷺ." He said: "Associating partners alongside Allāh, disobedience towards one's own parents, and false testimony."

It has also been recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim[2] that the Prophet said: "Avoid the seven destructive sins." It was asked: "What are they, Messenger of Allāh ﷺ?" He replied: "Polytheism, sorcery, killing any soul unlawfully, unlawfully consuming the wealth of the orphans, consuming usury, fleeing in combat and falsely accusing the chaste, unaware and believing women of unlawful sexual intercourse."

It has also been recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim that the Prophet was asked: 'What is the gravest sin?' He replied: "To set a partner alongside Allāh, when it is He Who created you." It was further asked: "Then what?" He replied: "To murder your child in fear that he or she will eat with you [fear of poverty]." It was again asked: "Then what?" He said: "To commit sexual intercourse with you neighbor's spouse." Then Allāh revealed the following verse to testify for this:

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Testimonies [2653]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Faith [87].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī [2766] and Muslim in the Book of Major Sins [89].

وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِي حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

"And those who do not invoke with Allāh another deity or kill the soul which Allāh has forbidden except by right and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse." [al-Furqan:68]

Scholars though have differed into two different opinions with regards to the major sins as far as their numbers and whether they are confined to a particular number. Furthermore, those who have confined the number are also divided as far as how many there are exactly:

Abdullah bin Mas'ūd said: "They are four."

Abdullah bin Umar said: "They are seven."

Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Aas said: "They are nine."

Others have said: "They are eleven."

Others have said: "They are seventy."

Abū Talib al-Maki said: "I enumerated them from the statements of the Companions and found that they are four in the heart, they are polytheism, persistence upon a sin, despair from the mercy of Allāh, and a false sense of reassurance from the torment of Allāh. Four on the tongue, they are false testimony, falsely accusing the chaste ones of illegal sexual intercourse, lying under oath to obtain a right that is not your own, and sorcery. Three in the stomach, they are consumption of alcohol, unlawfully consuming the wealth of orphans and consuming usury. Two from the private parts, they are fornication and sodomy. Two on the hands, they are murder and theft. One from the feet, and it is fleeing during combat and one that is connected to the entire body, which is unruliness to parents."

However, those who have not restricted it to a particular figure also have variations in their statements. Some say anything that has been prohibited in the Qur'ān is a major sin and anything that has been prohibited by the Messenger is lesser than that. Another group have stated: "Whatever carries the threat of a punishment such as a curse, wrath or specific punishment is a major sin and whatever is not coupled with such a threat is a lesser sin."

It has also been said: Anything that carries an Islamic reprimand in this life or a threat in the Hereafter is a major sin and whatever does not carry either of the two is a lesser sin.

It has also been said: Anything that has been agreed upon as unlawful from the various scriptures and legislations is from the major sins whilst anything that has been prohibited in some legislation aside from others is a lesser sin.

It has also been said: Any action wherein Allāh has cursed the perpetrator and His Messenger is a major sin.

It has also been said that it is all of what has been mentioned from the beginning of the chapter of *An-Nisā* until the verse:

إِن تَجۡتَنِبُواْ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنۡهَوۡنَ عَنۡهُ نُكَفِّرۡ عَنكُمۡ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمۡ ﴿٣١﴾

"If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins." [An-Nisa:31]

As for those who did not even divide sins into major and lesser, they justify this by saying that all sins are of a major type from the perspective that the defiance to Allāh and disobedience and opposition to the command of Allāh is a major sin. Thus, considering whose command has been opposed and whose laws have been violated warrants all sins to be major, and they are all equal in this regard. They also say: This perspective is made more evident as Allāh is not harmed by the sins of the creation nor do they have any effect on Him, thus none can be greater than the other, and this only leaves us to consider the sin itself and the violation and there is no difference in this regard between one sin to another.

They continue: It is further proved by the detriment of the sin being tied in with the level of defiance and violation of the rights of Allāh. For example, if an individual consumes alcohol or commits unlawful sexual intercourse whilst they believe it to be permissible, this person has combined between ignorance and the evil of partaking in sin. On the other hand, if someone who believes it is impermissible to do so, yet carries out this action, he would have fallen into one of the two evils and his punishment will be lesser than the first person's. Therefore, this indicates that the evil of a sin depends on the level of defiance and violation.

They go on to say: Another aspect that reinforces this argument is that any sin necessitates the belittlement of the command and prohibition of the one obeyed along with violating the sanctity whilst there is no difference in this from sin to sin.

They continue: One should not look to the magnitude of the sin in their own view, but instead consider the stature and might of the One who is disobeyed, and the violation caused of His sacred laws. Once again, this does not differ from sin to sin. If a mighty king were to order two of his subjects to deliver something to a distant land and the other to carry something out besides the dwelling and both of them disobey him, they would both be equal in receiving the king's wrath and devaluation.

They also said: Based on all this, we can see that the one who fails to perform the Hajj pilgrimage or the Friday prayer whilst able and residing in Mecca is worse than the one who fails to perform it from a distant land. The obligation on one is more than the other. Additionally, if someone possessed two hundred *dirham* but failed to pay *Zakat* whilst the other person had two hundred thousand yet failed to pay *Zakat,* they would both be the same in the wrong of rejecting to perform what is obligatory upon them and their positions in receiving a punishment as long as both of them persist in not offering the *Zakat* whether it is in a small amount of wealth or large.

Clarifying This Discussion

Allāh sent His Messengers, revealed His Books and created the heavens and the earth so the creation may come to know Him, worship Him alone and for the religion, obedience and supplication be delivered sincerely to Him. As Allāh said:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

"I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." [Ad-thariyat:56]

He also said:

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّۗ ﴿٨٥﴾

"We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them except in truth." [al-Hijr:85]

Allāh also said:

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ وَمِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّۖ يَتَنَزَّلُ ٱلْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًۢا ﴿١٢﴾

"It is Allāh Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like of them. His command descends among them so you may know that Allāh is over all things competent and that Allāh has encompassed all things in knowledge." [At-Talaq:12]

۞ جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡكَعۡبَةَ ٱلۡبَيۡتَ ٱلۡحَرَامَ قِيَٰمٗا لِّلنَّاسِ وَٱلشَّهۡرَ ٱلۡحَرَامَ وَٱلۡهَدۡيَ وَٱلۡقَلَٰٓئِدَۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتَعۡلَمُوٓاْ
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعۡلَمُ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٧﴾

And Allāh said: **"Allāh has made the Ka'bah, the sacred house standing for the people and the sacred months and the sacrificial animals and the garlands. That is so you know that Allāh knows what is in the heavens and the earth and that Allāh is knowing of all things." [al-Mā'idah:97]**

So Allāh has informed that the purpose of creation and His Words is so that He may be known through His Perfect Names and Attributes and so He may be worshipped without any partners and so the people may maintain their affairs in justice and that it is the justice that the heavens and the earth have been established on the basis of, as Allāh said:

لَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا رُسُلَنَا بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَنزَلۡنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ وَٱلۡمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلۡقِسۡطِۖ ﴿٢٥﴾

"We have already sent Our Messengers with clear evidences and sent with them the Scripture and balance that people may maintain their affairs in justice." [al-Hadid:25]

The greatest justice is to worship Allāh alone, in fact it is the pinnacle of all that is right and the root on which it stems from and polytheism is the greatest wrong. Polytheism is the highest form of wrong, whereas monotheism is the most upright form of justice, and whatever carries the greatest opposition to this aim of monotheism is considered the gravest major sin and its level varies accordingly, and whatever agrees most to this objective becomes the greatest obligation and act of obedience.

Contemplate on this principle and carefully consider its details in order to know the perfect Wisdom of the Most-Wise, and the Most

Knowledgeable in whatever He has ordered or prohibited His subjects with and the varying levels of acts of obedience and acts of disobedience.

Since polytheism negates this objective in its essence, consequently it is the largest major sin without exception. Allāh has made Paradise out of reach for every polytheist. Allāh has refused to ever accept an action from a polytheist or accept an intercession on his behalf, or accept a supplication from him in the Hereafter or pardon him of a mistake as the polytheist is the most ignorant one of his Lord, because he has set a partner and equal alongside the one who created him, which is the pinnacle of ignorance just as it is the greatest injustice. The polytheist has not oppressed his Lord but has only oppressed himself.

Here, an issue of discussion arises. It is that the polytheist's intent is to glorify the Lord and due to the Lord's noble stature, it would not be befitting to address Him unless there are intermediaries and intercessors just as is the case with the kings in this life. Thus, the polytheist did not intend to degrade the Lord, instead, he intended to glorify Him. He says: I worship these intermediaries so that they draw me closer to Him and allow me to address Him. This is the sole intent and these are means in intercessions. So why do these efforts warrant His wrath and anger and an eternal existence in the Hellfire?

Additionally, a further question follows on from this one and poses itself. It is: Is it viable that Allāh legislates that the method of gaining closeness to Him happens through intercessors and intermediaries – meaning, that this impermissibility stems from the legislation - or is it something rejected by the innate nature and intellect of mankind making it impossible for any legislation to bring, and that the legislations came to approve what is in the innate nature and the intellects from its heinousness? And what is the secret behind polytheism never being subject to forgiveness amongst all other sins? As Allāh said:

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ﴿٤٨﴾

"Indeed, Allāh does not forgive that partners are associated with Him, and forgives all else lesser than that to whoever He wills." [An-Nisa:48].

Reflect deeply over this question and consciously intend a presence of heart and mind for the answer, and do not marginalize it because it is the difference between the people of monotheistic Islamic belief and polytheists, and it is the difference between those who have knowledge of Allāh and those who do not, and the people of Paradise and the people of the Hellfire. Thus, I begin by saying – and success and assistance is granted by Allāh and from Him comes all the aid and accuracy, whomsoever He guides, none can then misguide and whomsoever He misguides, none can then guide, and there is none who can resist what He gives, and none can give what He resists:

Polytheism (shirk) is two types:

- A polytheism that is associated with the Essence and the Names and Attributes of Allāh.
- A polytheism that is associated with worship and actions devoted and directed to Him that can occur even if the one performing it believes that there is no equal or partner to Him in His Essence or His Attributes or Actions.

The first type of polytheism is also two types:

One: The polytheism of rejection (*Ta'ṭīl*). It is the most abhorrent form just like the polytheism of the Pharaoh who said: "What is the Lord of creation?" And he further addressed his ally Hāmān by saying: "Build me some steps so I may see the Lord of Musa (Moses), indeed I deem that he is from the liars." This form of rejection and polytheism is one and the same, as every rejectionist is a polytheist and every polytheist is a rejectionist. However, polytheism is not restricted to rejection, because a polytheist could hold the belief that there exists a Creator who possesses attributes, but this person may deny the fulfillment of worshipping Him alone.

Therefore, the origin of all polytheism and the base principle that it refers to is rejection (*Taʿṭīl*), and it is three types:

- Rejecting the creation belonging to a Creator
- Rejecting the Creator from possessing perfection by rejecting His Names, Attributes and Actions
- Rejecting the obligations of monotheism (*Tawḥīd*) that are incumbent upon a servant

From this arises the polytheism of the believers in *wahdatul wujood (pantheism)* who declare there is not more than one entity or being. Rather, the Lord is in essence one with the creation.

Also, the polytheism of the atheists who declare that the universe has no beginning and is eternal in the future and that it never ceased to exist at any point and is continuous and permanent. They also say that any occurrence in the universe originates in their view from means and intermediaries that are the only method by which something is created (denying the Creator) and they call this '*uqool*' and '*nufūs*'.

Likewise, this type of polytheism also gives rise to a polytheism that entails the rejection of the Names, Attributes and Actions of Allāh. This occurs from the extreme *Jahmites* and the *Qaramite* sects. They refuse to affirm a Name of an Attribute to Allāh and instead have professed that the creatures are more complete, because the perfection in essence is through the Names and Attributes.

The second type of polytheism is the type wherein an individual sets a partner to Allāh that they devote their worship to without negating His Names and Attributes and Lordship. Such as the polytheism of the

Christians who say Allāh is the third from three after believing Jesus and his mother to be deities.

This also resembles the polytheism of the pagan idolaters who say that all good originates from light, and evil is from darkness. From this comes the polytheism of the *Qadarīyah* sect who say that the creature creates their own actions and that such actions occur without the Free Will and Power of Allāh. Thus, it is through this they resemble the pagan idolater.

Also, from this form of polytheism is the type that the one who argued with Ibrahim (Abraham) committed:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِى حَآجَّ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ فِى رَبِّهِۦٓ أَنْ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّىَ ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ
وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا۠ أُحْىِۦ وَأُمِيتُ ۖ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْتِى بِٱلشَّمْسِ مِنَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ
ٱلْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ ٱلَّذِى كَفَرَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

"When Ibrahim [Abraham] said: 'My Lord is the One Who gives life and causes death,' he said: 'I give life and cause death.'" [al-Baqarah:258]

This argumentative person set himself as an equal to Allāh, falsely claiming that he gives life and causes death just as Allāh gives life and causes death. So Ibrahim [Abraham] imposed upon him that such an assertion would mean that you are also able to make the sun rise from a direction other than the direction Allāh makes it rise from. This is not a diversion from the initial claim of the disputants, in fact, it obliges one to present a proof for the claim.

Also, from this form of polytheism is the kind whereby someone set the planets and celestial bodies as equals to Allāh, making them Lords and controllers over the universe, as is the case with the polytheists of the *Sabi'ah* sect and others.

This form of polytheism also gives rise to the polytheism of sun and fire worshippers and others alike. There are those who claim that their deity is the one and true god, there are others who claim that their deity is the greatest of them all and there are others who claim that their deity is one of many and that if one were to devote themselves to this particular deity it would in return look after them. There are also others who claim that the lesser deity will draw them closer to the deity above, continuing in this fashion until they provide them with a connection with Allāh, so at times the intermediaries are many, and at times they decrease in number.

As for the polytheism committed in worship, it is of a lesser degree than the polytheism mentioned above (without trivializing the severity of either). It emanates from the one who believes there is none worthy of worship except Allāh, and that it is Allāh alone Who brings forth harm and benefit, provides and denies and believes there is no other Lord other than He. However, he may not devote some actions of worship with sincerity to Him but instead intend to satisfy his own ego, or a pleasure in the worldly life or higher status and position amongst the people. Nonetheless, a portion of his actions and endeavors are devoted to Allāh along with a portion being devoted to his own soul, his desires, to the devil and a portion to the creation. This is the state of the majority of people. It is the polytheism that the Prophet said regarding: "Polytheism in this nation is more obscure than the ants' footsteps." The Companions asked: "How do we find salvation from that, Messenger of Allāh ﷺ?" He replied: "Say: Allāh, I seek refuge in You from ever knowingly associating partners with You, and I seek You forgiveness for whatever I do not know." So every aspect of showing off (in worship) is polytheism.

Allāh said:

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَـٰهُكُمْ إِلَـٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ لِقَآءَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلْيَعْمَلْ
عَمَلًا صَـٰلِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَحَدًۢا ﴿١١٠﴾

"Say: 'Indeed, I am a man just like you but I receive revelation that your Lord is One. So whoever aspires for the meeting with his Lord – let him do righteous good deeds and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord'" [al-Kahf:110]

Just as there is no other true deity other than Allāh, it is only right to devote all acts of worship sincerely to Him and just as He has singled Himself out as the only true deity, it is only correct to single Him out in worship. Righteous actions are those that are clear of any showing off and restricted to the Prophetic *Sunnah*.

Among the supplications of Umar bin al-Khattab –Allāh be pleased with him- is: "Allāh, render all of my actions pious, and for Your Face sincere and do not render any portion of it to anyone else."[1] This type of polytheism within an act of worship nullifies the reward for that particular action, and the individual who commits it may be punished for it if the act was an obligation, because it would be as if it were not performed, so it would equate to a punishment for an obligation that has not been fulfilled. Allāh said:

وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓا۟ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ حُنَفَآءَ ﴿٥﴾

"They have not been ordered but to worship Allāh, sincere to Him in the religion inclining to the truth." [al-Bayinah:5]

Therefore, whoever does not sincerely devote their worship to Allāh alone has not done what has been required of him. In fact, he has done something not required of him, so it is not correct and will not be accepted from him.

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in Az-Zuhd [615].

Allāh says in a *Qudsi* narration: "I am the One Who is most free from need of partners. He who does a thing for the sake of someone else beside Me is left to the one he associated Me with, and I am free from him."[1]

This polytheism is divided into a type that is forgiven and a type that is not, or major and a lesser form.

As for the first type of polytheism mentioned previously, it is under the major form, some being more severe than the other and none of it is forgiven (if someone dies in that condition without repentance). From which is the polytheism in love and glorification whereby one loves someone or something from the creation as much as they love Allāh, this is from the polytheism that is not forgiven by Allāh and it the polytheism Allāh mentioned in the following verse:

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ ﴿١٦٥﴾

"And among the people are those who take other than Allāh as equals [to Him]. They love them as they should love Allāh. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh." [al-Baqarah:165]

Yet the perpetrators of such polytheism will say to their idols when they are gathered by the Hellfire:

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[1] Collected by Muslim in the Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter: The One Who Associates Partners With Allāh in Their Actions [2985].

تَٱللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٧﴾ إِذْ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

"By Allāh, we were indeed in manifest error, when we equated you with the Lord of creation." [Ash-Shu'ara:97-98]

Although it is well known that they did not equate them with Him in creating, providing sustenance, causing end to life, giving life, sovereignty or ability but they equated them in love, devotion and worship, submissiveness and servitude. This is the epitome of injustice and ignorance. How can dust ever be equated to the supreme Lord? How can the slave equate to the Master of all slaves? How can the destitute or the weak or the incapable or the needy who was once non-existent ever be equated to the One who is Self-Sufficient, principally able to do all things and possesses perfect independence, absolute sovereignty, perfect ability and benevolence, knowledge and mercy that are all from His essence?

Which injustice is greater than this? Which judgment is more unfair than this, as he has equated the One Who has no equal with His creation?

As Allāh says:

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ وَٱلنُّورَ ۖ ثُمَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِرَبِّهِمْ
يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١﴾

"Absolute praise belongs to Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth and created darkness and light, then those who disbelieve in their Lord equate others with Him." [al-Anʿām:1]

So the polytheist has equated the One who created the heavens and the earth and darkness and light with someone who does not even possess an atoms weight of the heavens and the earth for themselves or anyone else besides Allāh. What an abominable equation it is that necessitates the greatest and most despicable injustice!

Polytheism in Action, Statement and Intent

The aforementioned form of polytheism is also accompanied by the polytheism in actions, statements and intentions.

Polytheism in actions could be such as prostrating to other than Allāh, circumambulating around something other than the Sacred House, shaving the head in submissiveness to other than Allāh, kissing stones other than the black stone or kissing or greeting the graves or prostrating before them.

The Prophet has cursed the one who takes the graves of the pious and the Prophets as places of worship to Allāh, so what would be considered the case if the graves are taken as shrines that are worshipped besides Allāh!?

Al-Bukhārī and Muslim have both collected a narration on the authority Aisha and Ibn Abbas who report that the Messenger said: "Allāh has cursed the Jews and the Christians, they took the graves of the Prophets as shrines of worship."[1]

The Prophet also said: "From the worst of the people are those who are alive during the advent of the Hour, and those who take the graves as shrines of worship."[2]

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Prayer [435,436] and collected by Muslim in the Book of Places of Worship, Chapter: The Unlawfulness of Building Places of Worship on Graves [531].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 1/405 [3844]

The Prophet also said: "Indeed, those who came before you would take the graves as shrines for worship. Do not take the graves as shrines for worship, certainly I forbid you from that."[1]

Al-Imām Aḥmad has collected in the *Musnad* as well as Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet said: "Allāh has cursed the women who visit the graves, and those who take them as shrines for worship or hang lanterns on them."[2]

The Prophet also said: "Allāh's anger has intensified against a people who take the graves of their Prophet as shrines for worship."

He also said: "Those who came before you, if any pious man dies amongst them, they would build a place of worship at his grave and make these pictures on it. They are the worst creatures in the sight of Allāh on the Day of Resurrection."[3] This is the condition of the one who prays to Allāh at a grave shrine, so what about the one who prays in that same place to other than Allāh! The Prophet said: "Allāh, do not make my grave a shrine that is worshipped."[4]

The Prophet championed and defended the monotheistic Islamic belief to the utmost level, even prohibiting voluntary prayers during sunrise and sunset so that it does not become a means that leads to resembling the sun worshippers who prostrate to the sun during these two timings, and he did this by prohibiting any prayers directly after the dawn prayer (Fajr) and after the afternoon prayer ('Asr) due to their connection with the two timings that the polytheists prostrate to the sun in.

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[1] Collected by Muslim in the Book of Places of Worship, Chapter: The Unlawfulness of Building Places of Worship on Graves [532].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 1/229 [2030] and Ibn Ḥibbān [3179]. Also collected by At-Tirmidhī [320] and Abū Dāwūd [3236] and Ibn Mājah [1575] and An-Nisa'iee [2043], and others.

[3] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Prayer [434] and Muslim in The Book of Places of Worship, Chapter: The Unlawfulness of Building Places of Worship on Graves [528].

[4] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 2/246 [7358] and al-Bukhārī in At-Tarīkh [3/47].

As for prostrating for any being other than Allāh, he said: "It is unlawful for anyone to prostrate to anyone besides Allāh."[1] The term used in this narration (inappropriate) refers to something of utmost impermissibility in the legislation when mentioned by Allāh or His Messenger, such as in the statement of Allāh:

وَمَا يَنۢبَغِي لِلرَّحۡمَٰنِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ﴿٩٢﴾

"It is inappropriate for Ar-Rahman to have a son." [Maryam:92]

And:

وَمَا عَلَّمۡنَٰهُ ٱلشِّعۡرَ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِي لَهُۥٓۚ ﴿٦٩﴾

"We did not teach him poetry, nor is it befitting for him." [Ya Sin:69]

And:

وَمَا تَنَزَّلَتۡ بِهِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِي لَهُمۡ وَمَا يَسۡتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٢١١﴾

"And the devils have not bought the revelation down. It is not appropriate for them to do, nor would they be able to." [Ash-Shu'ara:210,211]

And His statement portraying the position the Angels have towards Him:

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[1] Collected by Ibn Ḥibbān [4162].

مَا كَانَ يَنۢبَغِى لَنَآ أَن نَّتَّخِذَ مِن دُونِكَ مِنْ أَوْلِيَآءَ ﴿١٨﴾

“It was not appropriate for us to take besides You any allies.” [al-Furqan:18]

Polytheism in Speech

Amongst the forms of polytheism committed besides Allāh is the type that occurs through speech, such as making an oath by other than Allāh, as has been reported in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad and the *Sunan* of Abū Dawud wherein the Prophet said: "Whoever swears by other than Allāh has committed *Shirk* [polytheism]."[1] Al-Hakim and Ibn Ḥibbān have authenticated this narration as Ṣaḥīḥ. Also, from this form of polytheism is the statement used when addressing someone by saying: "What Allāh wills and what you will." It has been authentically reported that a man said to the Prophet: "What Allāh wills and what you will," so he replied, "Have you set me as a partner to Allāh? Say: 'Whatever Allāh alone wills.'"[2]

This is the case even though Allāh has affirmed will power to a human, as is evident in His statement:

لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمْ أَن يَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٢٨﴾

"For whoever of you wills to be steadfast." [At-Takwīr:28]

Therefore, consider the state of someone who further states: "I am reliant upon Allāh and you," or "Allāh and you are sufficient for me," or "I have no one but Allāh and you," or "This is from Allāh and you," or "These are from Allāh's blessings and yours," or "Allāh takes care of me from the heavens and you take care of me from the earth," or by saying statements such as: "By Allāh and the life of so and so," or "I make a vow to Allāh and to so and so," or "I hope in Allāh and so and so," or "I repent to Allāh and so and so," and the likes.

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 2/125 [6072], Abū Dāwūd [3251], At-Tirmidhī [1535], Ibn Ḥibbān [2177] and al-Hakim 4/231 [7814].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad [1839, 1964, 2561, 3247] and al-Bukhārī in al-Adab al-Mufrad [234] and Ibn Mājah [2117] and others.

Compare the above statements with the statement of: "What Allāh wills and what you will," then find out which one of the two is viler, and it will be clear to you that the one who utters any of them is deserving of receiving the response of the Prophet, and if this individual were to set him as a partner to Allāh through such a statement, then the other has made someone who does not equate to the stature of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as a partner with Allāh in a particular matter. Rather, this person whom he has set as a partner to the Lord of all creation may even be an enemy to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

So prostration, other acts of worship, reliance, a frequent return to Allāh, piety, fear, sufficiency, repentance, vowing, oaths, *Tasbīḥ* (*Subḥān Allāh*), *Takbīr* (Allāh-u Akbar), *Tahlīl* (Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh), *Taḥmid* (Alhamdullilah), seeking forgiveness, shaving or trimming the hair in worship and submissiveness, circumambulating the Ka'bah and invocation is all an exclusive right that is directed to Allāh, and it is not correct or permissible to anyone else whether they be a close angel or a sent Prophet. A narration has been recorded in the *Musnad* of Al-Imām Aḥmad[1] that states that a man who had sinned was brought to the Prophet, when he came before him, he said: "Allāh I repent to you, not to Muhammad ﷺ." So the Prophet said: "He has recognized each one's due rights."

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[1] 3/435 [15587].

Polytheism in One's Aspirations and Intentions

Polytheism that dwells within aspirations and intentions is a shoreless ocean that very few people are saved from. Whoever intends other than the Face of Allāh with their actions or intends something other than a nearness to Him and His recompense has committed polytheism in their intention and aspirations. Sincerity is to purify your devotion to Allāh alone in your statements, actions aspirations and intentions. This is the upright creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) that Allāh ordered every one of His servants with, and none other than it is acceptable to Allāh. It is the true reality of Islām,

وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

"Whoever seeks other than Islām as a religion, it shall not be accepted from him and in the Hereafter he will be of the losers." [al-'Imrān:85].

It is the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham), that deems anyone who diverges from it to be of the feebleminded ones.

The Reality of Polytheism Is Through Resembling the Creation to the Creator and the Creator to the Creation

If you have come to know and understand this aforementioned prelude, the gateway has now become open for you to receive the answer for the question at hand. Thus, we say –and it is from Allāh alone we receive correct judgment-

the essence of polytheism is in resembling something or someone to the Creator and resembling the creation to Him. This is the creed of (*Tashbīh*) in its true form. Is consists of negating Allāh's perfect Attributes that He described Himself with and the perfect Attributes His Messenger described Him with. So the one whose heart Allāh has caused to invert has reversed the truth, caused blindness in his insight along with a mix-up of the reality. This individual believed the realization of *tawhid* (monotheism) to be in the creed of resemblance and that it is in reality a glorification and act of obedience.

Hence, the polytheist is someone who resembles the creation to the Creator in matters that are exclusive to Him. Amongst the things that belong exclusively to Allāh is His oneness in Sovereignty, harm, benefit, provision and deprivation and they all necessitate that any supplication, fear, hope and reliance must be directed to Him. Therefore, whoever attaches these affairs to any part of the creation has resembled it to the Creator in that he has resembled someone or something that is unable to bring benefit or repel harm from himself, nor does he possess the ability to cause himself to die or bring himself to life or resurrection, let alone have the ability to do this to someone else with the One who is control of every affair. The reigns of every affair are in His Hands, and they all return to Him, so whatever He wills takes place and whatever He does not will shall never take place. There is none who can deprive if He gives, and there is none who can give if He has deprived. In fact, if He opens His door of Mercy before His servant, none other than Him can withhold it and if He withholds it, none other than Him can release it. So it is from the most heinous acts of resemblance to liken this creation that is incapable and destitute by nature to the One who is self-sufficient and able to do all things.

Likewise, amongst the distinguishing aspects of divinity is ultimate perfection from every angle without deficiency from any perspective. This necessitates that any worship must be directed to Him alone including glory, veneration, fear, invocation, hope, repentance, reliance, requesting aid, utmost servitude alongside utmost love should all be directed to Him in accordance with legislation and a human's natural inclination. It is also intellectually and naturally inconceivable for such actions to be devoted to anyone else. Therefore, whoever offers such deed to someone else has resembled this other entity with the One Who is unlike anything from the creation Who possess no partners. This is the vilest form of resemblance and the most invalid. Due to the severity of this vileness and its inclusion of the pinnacle of all oppression, Allāh has informed His servants that He shall never forgive it even though He Has ordained Himself with Perfect Mercy.

Also, from the distinguishing aspects of divinity is the worship that is directed to him through the two pillars that act as the main framework for it: utmost love alongside utmost submissiveness. This is the worship in its in its fullest form, and the variation in levels amongst the people depends on their level of adherence to these two foundations. Whoever offers their love, submission and humility to other than Allāh has likened Him in one of His sole rights, which is something impossible for any divine legislation to present, and its vileness is deep-rooted in the natural inclination and intellects of mankind. But the devils have warped the natural inclinations and intellects of much of the creation, corrupted, and misguided them. As for those whom the best reward has been prescribed for them, they continued along the path of sound inclination and Allāh sent Messengers to them and revealed the scriptures to them that correspond to their natural inclination and intellects. Consequently, they receive compound light upon light:

۞ يَهْدِى ٱللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ ٣٥

"Allāh guides to His light whomsoever He wills." [An-Nur:35]

If one acknowledges this, then know that the other distinctive aspects of divinity consist of prostration. Thus, whoever prostrates to other than Allāh has likened that creation (being prostrated before) to Him.

Also, from them is reliance. Thus, whoever relies on other than Allāh has likened this creation to Him. Also, from them is repentance. So whoever repents to other than Allāh has likened this creation to Him. Likewise, from them is making an oath by a name in honor and glorification of that name. So whoever makes an oath by other than Allāh has likened that creation to Him. This is far as 'resemblance' is concerned.

As for of likening oneself to the Lord, then whoever behaves as if superior to the rest, or arrogantly and entices the people to exceedingly praise and glorify him whilst requesting their submissiveness to him, having hope in him and directing the hearts to fear, hope, seek security and aid from him has likened himself to Allāh. He has challenged Him in His lordship and worship. Hence, he is deserving of the utmost degradation and humiliation from Allāh dropping him to a level beneath the feet of His creation. In the *Ṣaḥīḥ,* al-Bukhārī reports that the

Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: "Allāh says: 'Honor is My *Izār* and Pride is My Cloak. Whoever vies with Me regarding one of them, I shall torment them.'"[1]

Since it is the case that the picture maker who fashions the picture with his hands is the most severely punished on the Day of Resurrection due to his likening of himself to Allāh in the creation of an image, what do you think would be the case for someone who vies with Allāh in His Lordship and worship? The Messenger said: "The most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection are the picture makers, it will be said to them: 'Give life to what you have fashioned.'"[2]

Furthermore, al-Bukhārī reports in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: "Who is a more unjust than one who tries to create a creation like Mine? Let him create an atom! Or a grain of wheat!"[3] Here, He cautions using the example of the atom or the grain also implying anything greater than that.

The intended point here is to highlight the condition of those who have taken a resemblance to Him through fashioning a picture of a living being, and how heinous it would be to go further than that and liken themselves in His Lordship and worship. The same applies for the one who resembles Him in a name that only Allāh is truly deserving of, such as *Malik al-Amlak* (King of Kings) or *Hakim al-Hukkam* (Judge of all judges) and the likes.

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[1] Collected by Muslim [2620].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of Clothing, Chapter: The Punishment of the Picture Makers on the Day of Resurrection [5950,5951]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of Clothing and Adornment [2108,2109].

[3] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Tawhid, Chapter: {Allāh Has Created You and What You Do} [7559]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of Clothing and Adornment [2111].

It has also been authentically reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī that the Prophet said: "The most disgraceful names for man in the sight of Allāh is when a man names himself 'Shahan Shah': King of Kings, as the Kingdom belongs to Allāh."[1] Another wording of the narration states: "The most detested man to Allāh is the one who calls himself 'Malik al-Amlak' [King of Kings]."[2] This is the dislike Allāh Has towards anyone who likens himself or herself to Him via a name that is only befitting to Allāh. He is The King of all Kings; The Judge of all judges and it is He who passes His judgment on them all.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Manners, Chapter: Some Names Are Specifically for Allāh [6205,6206]. Also collected by Muslim [2143].

[2] Also collected by Muslim [2143]

Uncovering a Reality in This Topic

Therefore, if the previously mentioned segment has been understood, here is a further mighty foundation that uncovers a subtle point on this topic. It is that the greatest sin against Allāh is to have evil assumptions about Allāh, as the one who harbors these evil assumptions carry consist of thoughts that do not meet Allāh's perfection, and this individual has thought of notions that are contradictory to His Names and Attributes. It is why Allāh has severely threatened those who harbor such evil assumptions about Him in a manner He has not done with others. He said that their recompense is:

عَلَيۡهِمۡ دَآئِرَةُ ٱلسَّوۡءِۖ وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَعَنَهُمۡ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمۡ جَهَنَّمَۖ وَسَآءَتۡ مَصِيرٗا ٦

"Upon them is a misfortune of evil and Allāh has become angry with them and has cursed them and prepared for them Hell, an evil destination." [al-Fath:6]

Allāh also says about those who reject as much as one of His Attributes:

وَذَٰلِكُمۡ ظَنُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمۡ أَرۡدَىٰكُمۡ فَأَصۡبَحۡتُم مِّنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٢٣

"And that was your assumption that you assumed about your Lord. It has brought you to ruin and you have become among the losers." [Fussilat:23]

Allāh has also informed about the address that Prophet Ibrahim made to his people.

He said:

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ أَئِفْكًا ءَالِهَةً دُونَ ٱللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ فَمَا ظَنُّكُم بِرَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

"And when he said, 'What do you worship. Is it falsehood as deities other than Allāh you desire? What are your thoughts about the Lord of creation.'" [As-Saffat:85-87]

What do you assume He will recompense you with when you meet Him having worshipped other than Him? And what are your assumptions of Him that have led you to worship other than Him? And what deficiency do you think are within His Names and Attributes and Lordship that has taken you to the extent of worshipping other than Him? If only you had thought what is correct and appropriate that He is aware of all things, able to do anything, self-sufficient, everything else is in need of Him, applies perfect justice over the creation, alone in absolute control of creation without a partner, knowledgeable of every detail and nothing escapes His knowledge, self-sufficient over His servants without having a need for any assistance, Merciful in essence and not in need of anyone to show His mercy. This is contrary to the one who is reigned over and other than them from the leaders as they are in need of others to inform them about the affairs of their subjects and their needs, and they are in need of others to assist them in accomplishing their needs or mediating to attain their mercy and kindness. Therefore, they are in need of intermediaries as a matter of necessity and due to their limited capabilities, weaknesses and limited knowledge.

As for The One who is able to do all things, self-sufficient, possesses knowledge of everything, Ar-Rahman, Ar-Rahīm, Whose mercy encompassed everything, including any intermediaries between Him and His creation is a disparagement of His Lordship, worship and oneness and an evil assumption about Him. It would never be legislated by Allāh and inconceivable to the minds and natural inclinations and something well resounding in the sound minds and at the pinnacle of everything that is vile.

This is further clarified in that the worshipper is venerating the one he worships, deifying it, submissive and humble before it. While it is The Lord Most High alone Who holds the sole right to this utmost glorification, veneration, deification, submissiveness and humbleness. This is His exclusive right and it is the most despicable of all injustices to offer this right to someone else or to associate partners with Him, especially since the one who has been set as a partner falsely is His servant and subject, as Allāh said:

ضَرَبَ لَكُم مَّثَلًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ هَل لَّكُم مِّن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم مِّن شُرَكَآءَ فِى مَا
رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ فَأَنتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ ﴿٢٨﴾

"He presents to you an example from yourselves. Do you have among those whom your right hand possesses any partners in what We have provided for you so that you are equal therein and would fear them as your fear of one another?" [Ar-Rum:28]

If you refuse that your slave share in your portion of provisions, how can you then set partners with Me who are my slaves in something that is only for Me, which is worship that should never be directed to anyone other than Me? Whoever asserts as much has not considered Me as they should, nor have they glorified Me as they should, nor singled Me in the affairs that I am deserving of.

The one who worships other than Allāh has not considered Him as he should do, as Allāh said:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَن يَخْلُقُوا۟ ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ
ٱجْتَمَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ ۖ وَإِن يَسْلُبْهُمُ ٱلذُّبَابُ شَيْـًٔا لَّا يَسْتَنقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۚ ضَعُفَ ٱلطَّالِبُ وَٱلْمَطْلُوبُ ﴿٧٣﴾ مَا
قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

"People, an example has been presented, so listen to it. Indeed, those you invoke besides Allāh will never create as much as a fly, even if they gathered together for that purpose. And if the fly should steal anything from them, they could not recover it from it. Weak are the pursuer and the pursued. They have not considered Allāh truly. Indeed, Allāh is perfect in Power and Might." [al-Hajj:73-74]

Thus, the one who worships something that is unable to even create the weakest and smallest of creatures besides Allāh has not truly considered Allāh, and if this fly escapes with something of the worshippers, he would not be able to retrieve it from him. Allāh says:

وَمَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ مَطْوِيَّٰتٌۢ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ۚ
سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

"They have not truly considered Allāh, while the earth entirely will be within His grasp on the day of resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His Right Hand. Exalted is He and perfect above what they associate with Him." [Az-Zumar:67]

The one who associates partners with Him in His worship with a false partner who does not possess any of these attributes in the least has not truly considered the One Who has this status and glory. In fact, they are weak and incapable! The person who associates a partner that is weak and lowly has not truly considered the One Who is Perfect in Power and Might!

Likewise, others who have not truly considered Allāh are those who say: He did not send Messengers to the creation nor did He reveal any Books. Instead, ascribing Him to things that are unbefitting and inappropriate for Him to do, such as neglecting His creatures and leaving them with command or prohibition, squandering them, leaving them without purpose and creating them in vain and play.

Also, from those who have not truly considered Him are those who negate the meanings of His perfect Names and Attributes, negating His Hearing and Sight, His Will and Choice, His Loftiness above His creation, His Speech whenever He wills to whomsoever He Wills or [the one who] negates His ability over the actions of His servants from obedience and piety whilst excluding it from being under His Power, Will and creation deeming that they create whatever they will of their own actions without the Will of The Lord. This entails from them that occurrences that Allāh does not will take place within His kingdom, and things that He does not Will actually occur! Allāh is exalted above the statements of such people who resemble the pagans.

Also, those who do not truly consider Allāh say: He punishes His servants for things they have not done nor have any influence in at all and that it is the action of the Lord Himself. Thus, He punishes His servants for His own actions and it is the Lord who has compelled the person to carry it out and that this compulsion is greater than an individual forcing someone else to do something. Bear in mind that it is something firmly established in the sound inclination that if a master forces his own slave to do something or does not allow him any other alternative but to carry it out, yet punishes him for doing it, it would be deemed as a reprehensible act. So how then could it ever be feasible for the Most Just, The Most Wise and The Most Merciful to ever compel His servants to do something that the servant has no influence in and then punish him for it? Allāh is far elevated over any imperfection. The notion and statement of such people is evil and reminiscent of the pagan belief, whilst both parties have not truly considered Allāh as they should.

Likewise, others who have not truly considered Allāh are those who fail to elevate Him from a well or a bush or any other place. Instead, they believe He dwells in every place and negate the belief He is above His Throne and that the good word rises to Him along with the righteous actions, and the Angels and Jibrīl ascend to Him and descend from Him, or that He controls every affair from above the heavens to the earth. Such people have failed to elevate Him to the station of Sovereign King and instead placed Him in every place that a human or even an animal would refuse to be in.

Likewise, others who have not truly considered Allāh are those who negate the actual meaning of His Attribute of Love, Mercy, Compassion, Pleasure, Anger and Wrath or those who negate the actual meaning of His Wisdom which entails every praiseworthy objective or those who negate the reality of His actions and minus Him of any action to occur through His will power, or deem His actions as being separate entities from Him or His ascension above the Throne, or Speaking to Prophet Musa [Moses] by the side of *At-Tur* mountain or negating that Allāh will come on the day of resurrection to pass the final judgment on the Day of Resurrection and other than that from His Perfect Actions and Attributes that they have negated whilst they claim that they are truly considering the status of Allāh by such negations.

The one who believes He has a partner and a son has not truly considered Him, nor does the one who believes he merges within the creation or that Allāh and the creation are one entity.

Likewise, they have not truly considered Allāh, those who say: He elevated the enemies of His Messenger due to them being from his bloodline and household, raised their mention and granted them rule, caliphate status and honor while He has debased the true allies of his household, degraded, humiliated them and left them in a state of dishonor wherever they may be. This entails the ultimate maligning of the Lord. Far elevated is He from the statements of the *rafidah (extreme Shi'ite).*

This type of statement is derived from the statement of the Jews and the Christians about the Lord of creation. [They claim concerning the Prophet] Allāh sent forth an unjust king who claimed prophet-hood for himself, lied against Allāh and lived through a lengthy period of time lying against Him whilst proclaiming: The Lord said such and such, He commands with such and such, He prohibits such and such. He proceeds in abrogating the legislations of the Prophets and Messengers whilst declaring the blood, wealth and women of their followers as lawful for him. He says: Allāh has legitimized it for me! Yet the Lord allows him to prevail, assists him, raises him, honors him, responds to his invocations, empowers him over his opposition, establishes the proofs for his truthfulness. None rise to become his enemy except that he conquers them, and he testifies to this through His statements and actions and approval whilst gradually presenting the proofs. Clearly, such a statement entails the most abhorrent disparagement of the Lord and His Knowledge, Wisdom, Mercy and Lordship. Far elevated is Allāh above the statements of the rejectionists.

Compare between the above statement and the statement before it from their *rafidah (extreme Shi'ite)* brethren and you will find both of them:

Suckling from the milk of one mother that they share — an oath we make to never separate

Additionally, the one who says the following has not truly considered Allāh: It is lawfully legislated that He punishes His allies and anyone else who does not disobey Him for as much as a blink of an eye then throws them into the Hellfire, whilst He admits His enemies and those who did not believe in Him for as little as a blink of an eye into the abode of bliss whilst both scenarios are of no difference. However, the pure revelation informs us of otherwise. We deem this above statement to be implausible due to the revelation and not because it is in opposition to His Wisdom and Justice. Allāh The Most Sublime Has absolutely rejected this notion in His Book and declared such a judgment as the worst of judgments.

He has not truly considered Allāh, the one who claims that The Lord will not or cannot revive the dead, or resurrect them from their graves, or gather His creation on a day to recompense the good-doer for the good they have done and recompense the evil-doer for their evil on a day the oppressed will retrieve his rights from the one who oppressed him, or honor the one who bore the difficulties in this life for His sake and in pursuit of His pleasure with the best reward, clarify to them that wherein they differed over and make those who disbelieved know that they were the liars.

He has not truly considered Allāh, the one who belittles the command of Allāh and disobeys Him, violates His prohibitions and partakes in them, does not fulfill His rights and squanders them, abandons His remembrance and neglects it with his heart heedless of it whilst his desires are more preferred to him than the pleasure of Allāh and the obedience to another creation is more important to him than obedience to Allāh. Thus, he affords Allāh with the surplus of what is left in his heart, speech and actions whilst placing his desires at the forefront because that is what is important to him. He also trivializes the watchfulness of Allāh over him whilst this individual is within His grasp.

But he values the watchfulness of other members of the creation with his entire heart and every limb. He shies away from the people but does not shy from Allāh. He deals with the creation to the best of his ability but when he deals with Allāh, he offers the most insignificant and debased thing he has. If he sets out in serving his beloved deity from mankind, he does so with all seriousness, endeavor and sincere counsel.

But if he sets out to offer the right of his Lord –if it happens- he does so in a fashion that not even someone like him amongst the creation would be satisfied with whilst proceeding to make an offering from his own wealth that he would be embarrassed to give to a creature like himself! Has this person who possesses such attributes truly considered his Lord?

Has he who sets an equal partnership between Him and His enemy in an exclusive right that should be delivered to Him from veneration, glorification, obedience, humility, submissiveness, fear and hope truly considered Allāh? If this individual rivaled the Lord's closest creation to Him as a partner, it would have been an audacious and unjust act against His exclusive right, a trivialization of His eminence and a partnership between Him and someone else who is undeserving of it. So how are we to consider a partnership set by this individual between the Lord and His most despised creation to Him, the most insignificant and detested. His true enemy, as there hasn't been anything worshipped besides Allāh except that it is the devil himself, as Allāh said:

۞أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ أَن لَّا تَعْبُدُواْ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ٦٠ وَأَنِ ٱعْبُدُونِيۚ
هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ٦١

"Did I not enjoin upon you, children of Adam, that you not worship Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy. And that you should worship Me alone. That is a Straight Path." [Ya Sin:60-61]

When the polytheists worshipped the Angels –as they claim- it was actually worship that was offered to the Satan whilst they thought they were worshipping the Angels. As Allāh said:

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِيَّاكُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَكَ أَنتَ
وَلِيُّنَا مِن دُونِهِم ۖ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ٱلْجِنَّ ۖ أَكْثَرُهُم بِهِم مُّؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

"And mention the day when He will gather them all and then say to the Angels, 'Did these ones used to worship you?' They will say: 'Exalted are You! You are our benefactor, not them. Rather, they used to worship the jinn, most of them believed in them.'" [Saba':40-41]

Satan invites the polytheist to worship him and gives the illusion that he is an Angel.

Also, the worshippers of the sun, moon and celestial figures claim that they worship the spirits within these bodies, and it is the same spirits that address them and fulfill their needs. This is why Satan meets the sunrise and why the disbelievers prostrate to it simultaneously prostrating before Satan as well. This is also repeated at sunset. And those who worship the Messiah 'Isa [Jesus] and his mother are not actually worshipping them. Instead, they worship the devil because he has made the assertion that they worship whomever he orders them to worship, is pleased with it and he commanded them to do so. This is the accursed Satan and certainly not the servant of Allāh and His Messenger.

Apply the above to the statement of Allāh:

۞ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ أَن لَّا تَعْبُدُوا۟ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ ﴿٦٠﴾

"Did I not enjoin upon you, children of Adam, that you not worship Satan." [Ya Sin:60]

Hence, no one from the children of Adam has every worshipped anything besides Allāh, whatever it may be, except that it is a concurrent worship of Satan. Therefore, the worshipper gains pleasure from the worshipped by attaining his objective, and the worshipped gains pleasure in the false glorification and partnership with Allāh he receives, which is the ultimate desire of Satan. Allāh says:

"And the day when He will gather them together [and say], 'Assembly of the jinn, you have misled many of mankind.'" i.e., deviated and misguided them.

وَقَالَ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ رَبَّنَا ٱسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَغْنَآ أَجَلَنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَجَّلْتَ لَنَا ۚ قَالَ ٱلنَّارُ
مَثْوَىٰكُمْ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

"Their allies among mankind will say, 'Our Lord, some of us found pleasure in others and we have now reached the end of our term which You appointed for us,' He will say: 'The Fire is your abode wherein you will abide eternally, except for what Allāh wills. Indeed, your Lord is Wise and Knowing." [al-Anʿām:128]

What has preceded is a subtle indication to the reason that has set polytheism as the gravest sin before Allāh. He does not forgive it without repentance from the perpetrator and it warrants an eternal existence in the Hellfire. Its impermissibility and vileness does not just amount from its prohibition, but in fact it is inconceivable that Allāh ever legitimize a deity besides Himself as it would also be inconceivable for Him to ever contradict His perfect Attributes. How can anyone ever assume that the One Who is alone in Lordship, worship and glorification permits a partnership in all of this? Far elevated and free is Allāh from that.

The Reason Polytheism Is the Gravest Sin

Polytheism is the gravest act to contradict the purpose that Allāh created the creation to fulfill and legislated the commands for, and for this reason it is the greatest of all the major sins before Allāh. As well as arrogance and its effects as previously mentioned. Indeed, Allāh created the creation and revealed the Books so He can be singled out in absolute obedience, whilst polytheism and arrogance negate this. Thus, Allāh has forbidden Paradise for the polytheists and nobody with an atoms weight of arrogance shall enter it.

Speaking About Allāh Without Knowledge

An affair that equates to both of the above in their evil effects is speaking about Allāh in His Names, Attributes and Actions, describing Him with something contrary to how He described Himself and how His messenger described Him without knowledge. It is the ultimate contradiction and negation of the perfection of the One Who created the creation and revealed the scriptures and it is a vilification against His Lordship and sole rights as the Lord. If this act occurs based on knowledge, it is a form of stubbornness worse than polytheism and a graver sin against Allāh. Certainly, the polytheist who acknowledges the Attributes of the Lord is better than the one who negates and rejects His perfect Attributes. As the individual who acknowledges sovereignty for a king without rejecting his sovereignty or the attributes that qualify him to be a king but sets up a partner with this king to use as an intermediary that draws him closer to the king is better than the one who rejects the attributes of sovereignty for the king and any other attribute that qualifies him for it.

This matter is resounding in the intellects and natural inclinations of people. Where does a maligning and complete rejection of His perfect Attributes compare to setting up an intermediary between the only One who is worshipped in truth and the worshipper through which he uses as an object of worship in the false attempt at glorification and honor of it? So the illness of rejection is a terminal illness that does not have a remedy. It is why Allāh so clearly elaborated on the affair of the chief rejectionist, Fir'awn (the Pharoah). He rejected what Musa (Moses) informed him of about his Lord being above the heavens, he said:

يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ ٱبۡنِ لِي صَرۡحٗا لَّعَلِّيٓ أَبۡلُغُ ٱلۡأَسۡبَٰبَ ٣٦ أَسۡبَٰبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّي
لَأَظُنُّهُۥ كَٰذِبٗاۚ ٣٧

"O Haman, construct me a tower so I may reach the paths, the paths of the heavens so I may see the deity of Musa, but indeed I think he is a liar." [Ghafir:36-37]

Al-Shaykh Abūl-Hassan al-Ashʿarī used this verse in his authorships as a proof against the rejectionists and I have quoted the phrases he used in some of my other books. In summary, both speaking about Allāh without knowledge and polytheism are two inseparable matters.

Innovations Are More Beloved to Iblis (Satan) Than Sins

Since such misguiding innovations amount to nothing but ignorance of the Attributes of Allāh, and a stubborn and ignorant denial of the revelation that Allāh has informed us of about Himself and what His Messenger has informed us of, it is therefore considered the worst of the major sins –if it has not reached the stage of unbelief- and becomes more beloved to Iblis (Satan) than the major sins that are void of innovation. Some of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) would say: "Innovation is more beloved to Iblis (Satan) than sins, because sins are repented from and innovation is not repented from." Iblis (Satan) himself said: "I ruined the children of Adam through sins, and they ruined me by seeking forgiveness and with "Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh" (There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh), so when I saw this, I spread innovations amongst them so they may sin through them and not repent, because they deem that they are doing good!"

Nonetheless, it is known that the sinner harms himself. As for the innovator, his harm exceeds onto others. In addition, the innovator's issue lies in the foundations of the religion, whereas the sinner's issues lie in a desire. The innovator has set himself in wait on the straight path of Allāh to obstruct others from it, but the sinner has not done so. The innovator maligns the Attributes and the perfection of the Lord, whereas the sinner does not do so. The innovator attempts to invalidate what the Messenger has been sent with, whereas the sinner's case is not the same. The innovator hinders the path to the Hereafter for others whilst the sinner is slow to move along this path due to his sins.

Transgression Against Others and Oppression Are Also from the Gravest Sins

Oppression and transgression both oppose the justice that the heavens and earth were created to facilitate, the reason the Messengers were sent to their people and the reason the Books and Scriptures were sent to the people for them to act by. Therefore, it assumed the position of one of the most major sins before Allāh and the level of its severity is specifically determined in accordance to its evil.

Murdering one's own small and innocent child whilst Allāh has created the hearts of the creatures to treat them with mercy and inclined the hearts to be kind to them whilst He has distinguished the parents with clear distinction in this, yet the parent murdering this child in fear that they share a portion of their food, drink or wealth with them is from the most heinous forms of oppression imaginable. The same applies in the reverse manner. The enormity of the crime is the same in the case that a child murders his or her own parents who were the sole reasons for their existence, and likewise any murder of a relative.

The degrees of murder vary in severity depending on the vileness of the crime and how vigilant the murderer should have been in protecting the life of the victim. Thus, the most severely punished on the day of resurrection is the one who murders a Prophet or is executed by one. This is followed in severity by one who murders a leader or a scholar who orders the people to establish justice and invites them to Allāh and sincerely counsels them in their religion.

Allāh has ordained that the recompense for the one who intentionally murders an innocent, believing soul is a prolonged existence in the

Hellfire, whilst the Lord becomes Angry with that murderer, decrees a curse upon him and prepares a painful torment for them. This is the outcome for the one who intentionally murders a believer as long as there is no preventative for the perpetrator to receive this recompense. And there is a unanimous agreement that voluntarily and willingly embracing the religion of Islām after the perpetration or murder is a preventative from receiving such recompense in the Hereafter.

However, does the repentance of a Muslim prevent from such recompense? There are two opinions amongst the scholars of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) and their successors in this regard, and both are narrations from al-Imām Aḥmad.

Those who say: This person's repentance does not prevent the establishment of the recompense, deem that it is the victim's right that he did not receive in the worldly life as he left this life as someone who has been oppressed. Therefore, he must receive it in the abode of justice (the Hereafter).

They go on to say: The right that the victim's next of kin receives is his own exclusive right that Allāh has given him a choice in between receiving it or pardoning. However, the victim does not benefit from his next of kin receiving their rights. Also, which injustice has the victim been relieved of through the rights of their next of kin being afforded to them?

This is the more authentic of the two opinions in this matter. It is that the right of the murdered victim is not fulfilled through the next of kin receiving theirs. These narrations have been reported through the students of al-Imām Aḥmad and al-Imām As-Shāfi'i respectively.

There is another group who declare that the recompense no longer applies after repentance and justice has been afforded to the next of kin of the victim, because repentance abolishes any evil that preceded it, and the legislated penalty has been established on the one who committed the crime.

They continue to justify this by saying: If repentance eliminates any residue of disbelief, sorcery and what is even worse than murder, how can it then fail to eradicate the effects of murder? Allāh accepted the repentance of the disbelievers (at the time) who murdered His faithful allies and decreed thereafter that they become from His most elite servants and also invited those who charred His faithful allies and painfully trialed them to leave their religion of Islām to repent.

He said:

۞قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا۟ مِن رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ

﴿٥٣﴾

"Say: 'My servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the Mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins.'" [Az-Zumar:53]

This verse is in reference to the repentant one, and it encompasses disbelief and anything less.

They also say: How can someone repent from a sin and then be punished for it after repentance? This is something contradictory in the legislation and recompense of Allāh.

They go on to clarify: The repentance for such an individual is to surrender himself or herself, but it is impossible to surrender oneself to the murdered victim, so the legislation has placed his next of kin in place of the victim and made the surrender to them equivalent to surrendering to the murdered victim. This is analogous to the scenario in which wealth is handed to the family of the one who is owed (after death). It is in place of handing it to the person who is owed.

After careful scrutiny of the matter, it is true that murder is related to three separate rights: a right to Allāh, a right to the murdered victim and a right to the heir. So if the culprit willingly surrenders in remorse for what they have committed in fear of Allāh and in sincere repentance, in this case the right of Allāh has been fulfilled. As for the right of the heir, it is afforded either by establishing the legislated penalty, reconciliation or forgiveness. This leaves the right of the deceased who will be compensated by Allāh on the Day of Resurrection on behalf of his remorseful and righteous servant rectifying between the perpetrator and the victim. So the victim's rights are not squandered and neither is the repentance invalid.

As for the matter of money, the scholars have also differed in it. A group of them said: If the one who has taken the money has paid the money back to the heir, he is exonerated in the Hereafter just as he becomes exonerated in the worldly life.

Another group of them declare: The demand is from the one who was oppressed who will retrieve what is owed to him on the Day of Resurrection whilst he is unable to do this if his heir receives the money in his place. The victim was prevented from taking advantage of his own wealth during his life and died without benefiting from it. This is oppression he has not been relieved from, rather, others have benefited from it.

Upon this understanding, the second group of scholars has derived that if ownership transfers from person to person and the heirs to the wealth multiply, they all have a right to it because it was a right that should have been paid to them all, as they are all inheritors. This opinion is one of a group of companions of Malik and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

Our Shaykh (Ibn Taymīyah) has elaborated in some detail regarding the position of both parties, he said: "If the person who is owed the wealth was able to take back their wealth or demand it but did not do so until he passed away, the right still remains for him to demand in the Hereafter, as would be the case in the worldly life. If he was unable to demand it or retrieve it and something of an injustice or transgression obstructed him from obtaining it, he can repeat this demand in the Hereafter.

This is the best study of the matter that can be said. If the wealth is used by the oppressor and the heir is unable to retrieve it, the scenario becomes principally equal to a situation whereby the person has a servant who was murdered by a stranger, or his home that was burnt down by someone else, or his food and drink that was consumed by someone else. All this is a loss for the heir to the money and the right to demand rests with the one who has lost the possession.

The following is left to say: If the wealth was in the form of an estate, or land or an existing and working possession after the death of the rightful owner, it belongs to the heir and the oppressor must provide the rightful owner with the returns. If he fails to do so, the heir can demand it before Allāh just as it is demanded from him in the worldly life.

Nonetheless, a powerful question poses itself that cannot be answered except by saying: They are collectively entitled to demand it just as in the case if wealth was unlawfully looted or an endowment was unlawfully taken from a group of people, they would all have a right to demand it back and the demand could be made on the Day of Resurrection from them all and none would be more entitled to it than anyone else. Allāh knows best.

Murdering One Soul Is As Vile As Murdering All of Humanity

Allāh mentioned regarding the evil of murder:

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنَّهُۥ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًۢا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۚ ﴿٣٢﴾

"Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Isrā'īl that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or corruption done on the earth – it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one – it is as if he had saved mankind entirely." [al-Mā'idah:32]

The understanding of this has proved problematic to many people. They say: It is well known that the misdeeds accumulated for murdering one-hundred people are more than earned for murdering one person (so how are they equal in the verse). This problem arose for them because they correlated the quantity of the sins with the punishment itself. However, the statement itself does not provide this understanding and it is not necessary that if something is resembled with something else they must hold the same rulings. Allāh said:

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا۟ إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٤٦﴾

"On the day they see it, it would be as though they had not remained in it except for a morning or an afternoon." [An-Nazi'at:46]

And He said:

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍۚ ﴿٣٥﴾

"On the day they see what they were promised, it would be as if they had not remained except an hour from a day." [al-Ahqaf:35]

This does not necessitate that they lived in the worldly life for that length of time.

The Prophet said: "Whoever prays the 'Isha prayer in congregation, it is as if he prayed for half the night. And whoever prays the Fajr prayer in congregation, it is as if he has prayed the entire night."[1] i.e., he prayed both 'Isha and Fajr in congregation as appears in another narration. Clearer than this is the statement of the Prophet: "Whoever fasts the entirety of Ramadan and follows it up with six days from Shawāl, it would be as if he has fasted the entire year,"[2] and his statement: "Whoever recites the chapter of *Ikhlāṣ* is as if he has recited a third of the Qur'ān."[3]

It is known that the reward for the one who carries out these actions does not reach the reward for the action it has been resembled with, let alone for it to even be equivalent. If the reward was equal, there would be no advantage for the one who prays the 'Isha and Fajr prayers in congregation to rise during the night and pray apart from tiredness and exhaustion.

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[1] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Mosques, Chapter: The Virtues of Praying 'Isha and Fajr Prayers in Congregation [656].

[2] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Fasting, Chapter: The Recommendation in Fasting Six Days from Shawal [1164].

[3] Collected by Muslim [811] and in a similar narration [812]. Also collected by al-Bukhārī [5015].

No servant has been given anything greater after the virtue of faith than an understanding about Allāh and His Messenger, these are the blessings of Allāh, He affords to whosoever He wills.

If it is then said: What is the point in resembling the one who murdered one person to someone who murdered mankind entirely? The answer: from a number of perspectives:

One: Each one is in defiance to Allāh and His Messenger, in opposition to His command and exposed to His punishment. Each one has gained the Anger and curse of Allāh and qualified for an eternal abode in the Hellfire and Allāh has prepared a terrible torment for him despite the pits of Hell being at various depths. The sin of murdering a Prophet or a just leader or a scholar who commands the people to be just is not the same as murdering someone of no distinction from amongst the masses.

Second: They are the same in that they both warrant capital punishment.

Third: They are equal in their audacity of spilling blood unlawfully. Undoubtedly, the one who murders a soul unjustly only to cause corruption on the earth or to loot the victim's wealth is also capable of murdering anyone else they subdue. So this person is an enemy to humanity.

Also, from another perspective: He is named and known as a 'murderer', 'corrupt', 'oppressor' or 'insolent' due to his murder of one human, just as he would be known as such if he massacred the entire population of mankind.

Another perspective: Allāh has made the believer like one body in their love, mercy and relationships with one another; if one part of it complains, the rest of the body suffers from fever and insomnia. Therefore, if a murderer kills any part of this body, it is as if he has killed the remainder of the body with it and caused pain to every limb. Whoever harms one believer is as if he has harmed every believer, and whoever harms every believer, it is as if he has harmed everyone, and Allāh repels harms from the people because of the believers who are amongst them whilst the harm that afflicts the guard is also harm to the guarded.

The Prophet said: "No soul is wrongfully taken except that some of the burden of its blood is upon the first son of Adam, because he was the first to institute murder."[1] This threat has not appeared against the first one to fornicate, or the first to steal or the first to consume intoxicants, even though it is a more befitting threat against the first polytheist because he was the first to institute polytheism. Hence, the Prophet saw the scenario in which 'Amr bin Luhay was being punished in the most tormenting manner in the Hellfire because he was the first to alter the religion of Ibrahim [Abraham]. Allāh said:

وَلَا تَكُونُوٓاْ أَوَّلَ كَافِرِۭ بِهِۦۖ ﴿٤١﴾

"Do not be the first to disbelieve in Him." [al-Baqarah:41] i.e., do not be the first in order to allow those who come after you to follow you, consequently giving you a share of the sin. The same principle applies to the one who institutes an immoral act.

It has been recorded in At-Tirmidhī[2] on the authority of Ibn Abbas who narrated from the Prophet that he said: "The victim will come along with his killer on the Day of Resurrection holding his head in his hand with his jugular veins flowing with blood and saying: 'O Lord, ask this one: 'Why did he kill me?'" They then mentioned the option of repentance to Ibn Abbas and the verse:

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Narrations of the Prophets, Chapter: The Creation of Adam and His Offspring [3335] and Muslim [1677].

[2] [3029]. Also collected by An-Nisa'ie [4005].

وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا ﴿٩٣﴾

"Whoever kills an innocent believing soul." [An-Nisa:93] He then said: "This verse was never abrogated nor has it been altered. There is no way the repentance could avail him!" At-Tirmidhī declared this narration to be *Ḥasan.*

Also, in At-Tirmidhī[1] on the authority of Nafi' who said: "Abdullah bin Umar stared at the Ka'ba one day and said: 'How great are you and how great is your sanctity, and the believer is more sacred to Allāh than you.'" At-Tirmidhī declared this narration as *Ḥasan.*

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[2] on the authority of Jundub who said: "The first thing to rot from the human body is the abdomen, so he who can eat nothing but good food (Halal and earned lawfully) should do so, and he who does as much as he can for nothing to intervene between him and Paradise by not shedding even a handful of blood should do so."

Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[3] on the authority of Ibn Umar who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'A believer continues to persevere in his Faith as long as he does not shed blood unjustly [murder].'"

Al-Bukhārī also mentioned in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[4] on the authority of Ibn Umar who said: "From the predicaments that there is no escape for the person who puts themselves in is shedding blood unlawfully."

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[1] [2032].

[2] Book of Judgments, Chapter: If You Cause People Difficulties, Allāh Will Cause You Difficulties [7152].

[3] Book of Blood Money, Chapter: {Whoever murders a believer intentionally shall have a recompense of the Hellfire} [6862].

[4] Book of Blood Money [6863].

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and of Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurairah in a *marfū'* narration: "Insulting a Muslim is sin and fighting him is unbelief."[1]

Also, in both of the aforementioned books, it has been reported that the Prophet said: "Do not convert to unbelief, [by] striking the necks of one another."[2]

Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī[3], it is reported that the Prophet said: "Whoever killed a *Mu'āhad* [a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims] shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise though its fragrance can be smelt from a distance of forty years." This is the punishment dealt to the one who kills someone who has enmity to Allāh when there is a pact and agreement of security between the two, so what would the punishment be in the case of the murder of a believer? And as a woman entered the Hellfire on account of a cat that it trapped and died out of hunger and thirst and the cat will scratch at her face and chest as a punishment in the Hellfire, what would be the punishment be for the entrapment of a believer until he dies without having committed a crime?

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[1] The narration in both al-Bukhārī and Muslim is on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd. Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Faith, Chapter: The Fear of the Believer From Nullifying His Actions Whilst Unaware [48], and collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith [64]. As for the narration on the authority of Abū Hurairah, Ibn Mājah has collected it in The Book of Trials and Tribulations [3940].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Trials and Tribulations [7077-7080] and Muslim in The Book of Faith [65-66].

[3] On the authority of Abdullah bin 'Amr [3166].

In some of the books of *Sunnah* on the authority of the Prophet who said: "The disappearance of the entire world is more insignificant to Allāh than killing a believer without right."[1]

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[1] Collected by An-Nasā'ī [3990].

The Ills of Fornication and Adultery Follow Those of Murder in Severity

Since the ills of fornication and adultery are amongst the worst and the act itself is in defiance to the preservation of lineage, safeguarding the chastity of the private parts, upholding sanctity and is a reason for great animosity and hatred between the people due to the damage it spreads to another person's wife, daughter, sister and mother whereby an enormous amount of disorder throughout the world occurs. It is therefore closely associated to the ills of killing in terms of severity. This is why Allāh has related the two acts together in His Book, and the Prophet has also done so in His traditions and statements as previously mentioned.

Al-Imām Aḥmad said: "I do not know of any sin after murder that is worse than fornication."

Allāh has reinforced its impermissibility in His Book by saying:

وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ ۚ
وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿٦٨﴾ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهُ ٱلْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِۦ مُهَانًا ﴿٦٩﴾ إِلَّا مَن تَابَ
﴿٧٠﴾

"And those who do not invoke with Allāh another deity or kill the soul which Allāh has forbidden, except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever should do that will receive a penalty. Multiplied for him is the punishment on the day of resurrection, and he will abide therein humiliated – except for those who repent." [al-Furqan:68-70]

Here, He related murder and unlawful sexual intercourse together and has decreed that the punishment for such an act will be a prolonged existence in an intensified torment, as long as the perpetrator does not remove this burden from himself through repentance, pure faith and righteous deeds.

Allāh says:

وَلَا تَقۡرَبُواْ ٱلزِّنَىٰٓۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةٗ وَسَآءَ سَبِيلٗا ﴿٣٢﴾

"And do not go near unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way." [al-Isra:32]

He outlines its immoral nature, it is the despicable act that has reached a level whereby its vileness is known to every sound mind and even the animals, as al-Bukhārī has reported in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[1] on the authority of 'Amr bin Maymun al-Awdi who said: "In the time of pre-Islamic ignorance I saw a monkey fornicating with another monkey. So the other monkeys gathered around them and pelted them with stones until they both died." Then, Allāh mentioned that it is evil as a way as it is a destructive, ruined and destitute path to be on in this life and a path of torment, dishonor and exemplary punishment in the Hereafter, whereas the sexual relations performed with the father's spouse is the worst of its kind. He specified its mention with additional dispraise and said:

إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةٗ وَمَقۡتٗا وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٢﴾

"Indeed, it was an immorality and hated [by Allāh] and was evil as a way." [An-Nisa:22]

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[1] The Book of the Virtues of the Ansar [3849].

Allāh associated a person's ultimate success in honoring their chastity, there cannot be any other way, He said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ فِى صَلَاتِهِمْ خَـٰشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ ٱللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَوٰةِ فَـٰعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَـٰفِظُونَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَـٰنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْعَادُونَ ﴿٧﴾

"Certainly will the believers have succeeded. They, who are during their prayer humbly submissive. And they who turn away from ill speech. And they who are observant of Zakat. And they who guard their private parts. Except from their wives or those whom their right hand possesses, for indeed they will not be blamed. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors." [al-Mu'minūn:1-7]

This consists of three affairs: Whoever does not guard their private parts cannot be from the successful ones, they are from the blameworthy ones and they are of the transgressors. Therefore, they lose out on success, they warrant the label of 'transgressors' and are blamed for their actions. In reality, the pain of withholding from the sexual urges and the struggle therein is easier than some of the above repercussions. Similar to this is the description that Allāh has given to man in that he was created anxious and unable to be patient in times of ease or hardship, when good touches him he withholds it and when he is touched with evil, he is impatient excluding those saved ones from His creation who are an exception. He mentioned some of them:

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾
فَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْعَادُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

"And those who guard their private parts. Except from their wives or those their right hand possesses, for indeed they are not to be blamed. But whoever seeks beyond that, then they are the transgressors." [al-Ma'arij:29-31]

Allāh ordered His Prophet to command the believers to lower their gazes and guard their chastity and to teach them that He sees all of their actions and is well aware of them:

يَعْلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ ٱلْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِى ٱلصُّدُورُ ﴿١٩﴾

"He knows the traitorous glance and what the breasts conceal." [Ghafir:19].

Since the early stages of unlawful sexual intercourse resonates from a look, He declared that lowering the gaze takes precedence in order to guarding the private parts, because such incidents originate from the sight just as the majority of fires ignite from small sparks. So it may be one look, followed by another and another, then the major offence. This is why it is said that whoever safeguards four things completes their religion: the glances of eye, the thoughts that cross the mind and the statements and the steps. An individual should be his own gatekeeper at these four doors and remain stationed on guard at these openings because it is through them that the enemy enters and probes into the dwelling before completely destroying what they have taken over.

Four Entryways for Sins

Sins predominantly creep into an individual through these four passages and we shall mention a segment for each one respectively:

The Glance

As for the glance, it is the director and guide for desires, and safeguarding it is the starting point for safeguarding the private parts, because whoever is careless in their glances shall find that they lead them to ruin. The Prophet said: "Do not follow one [unlawful] glance with the other, the first [accidental] one is for you [unaccounted for] and the second is not."[1] Also, in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad: The Prophet said: "The [unlawful] glance is a poisoned arrow from the arrows of Iblis [Satan]. Whoever diverts their gaze from the appearances of women for the sake of Allāh, Allāh will cast sweetness in their heart until the day he meets Him." This is the meaning of the statement.

The Prophet said: "Divert your gaze and safeguard your private parts."[2]

He also said: "Beware of assembling along the pathways." The people said: "Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, we only have them as sitting places." The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: "If you must, then observe the rights of the way." They asked, "What are the rights of the way?" He said: "To lower your gaze [from what is unlawful to look at], abstain from harm and return greetings."[1]

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[1] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [2149], At-Tirmidhī [2777], al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 5/352,353 [22974,22991].

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in the *Musnad* 5/323 [22757], Ibn Ḥibbān [271], al-Hakim 4/399 [8066].

The glances are the initial foundation for the incidents that affect an individual, because the glance gives rise to a thought, then the thought gives birth to an idea, an idea evokes a desire and the desire develops a crave, then this craving intensifies and becomes resolute conviction which inevitably results in the action as there is no intervention. In this regard, it has been said: "Patience upon lowering the gaze is easier than patience upon the pain of what happens after it." The poet said:

Every incident's beginning is from a glance — and the majority of fires are from a small spark

How many glances have reached within the heart — where the arrow has reached, but without a bow or a shooters hand

As long as the servant persists in glancing — he is subject to the danger

He satisfies his eyes with harm to his heart — unwelcomed is a joy that results in harm

From the plights of such glances is that they produce sorrow, sighs of regret and burning aguish. He sees what he is unable to obtain or able to resist. It is one of the most painful torments to witness something you are unable to resist and unable to be patient without and unable to have at the same time.

The poet wrote:

Whenever you send your sight forth to lead — to your heart, the sights have troubled you

You see what you cannot have — nor can you resist from part of it

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī [2465] and Muslim [2121].

This stanza requires an explanation. It means that you see something you are unable to resist yet you cannot obtain anything from it. His words '*what you cannot have*' are a negation of his ability to obtain all of it that can be negated through a person's lack of ability to obtain any part of it. How many have indulged their glances and refused to refrain until they found themselves in the midst of them as a fatality, as the poet wrote:

O' you who is glaring, you did not refrain from looking — until you were in
their midst as one of the dead

I also have some lines of poetry I have written:

He became bored of safety and his glances enhanced — standing by a ruined
home, yet he thinks it's beautiful

He continues to glance one after the other — until he ruins himself in
between the glances

From the peculiar affairs is that a person's glance does not reach the one being glanced at until it holds a position in the heart of the one who is glancing. I have written some lines in this regard:

O' the one who throws the arrows of their glances in all endeavor — you are
the fatality with what you throw without effort

The eye is sent forth constantly — withhold your messenger, let it not come
back to you with your own destruction

What is even more astounding is that a glance can injure the heart, and this may be followed by multiple injuries. Eventually, the pain of these injuries will not prevent an individual from repeatedly glancing, and I also have some poetry about this:

You continue to follow a glance with another — another follows every
pleasant sight

You think that it's the remedy to your wound, but in fact — it is a wound to another

The proverb quotes: Confining the glances is easier than a continuity of regret.

The Passing Thought

As far as the passing thought is concerned, its affair is more serious, because it is the beginning of all good or evil and from it develops the cravings, resolve and determination. Thus, whoever manages their thoughts appropriately has taken control of the soul's reigns and subdued their desires. But whoever allows their thoughts to defeat them will surely be conquered even more by their desires and their soul, and whoever underestimates their thoughts will find that they drive him to his destruction. The thoughts will continue to frequent the heart until they become fake ambitions, as Allāh says:

كَسَرَابِۭ بِقِيعَةٖ يَحۡسَبُهُ ٱلظَّمۡـَٔانُ مَآءً حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَهُۥ لَمۡ يَجِدۡهُ شَيۡـٔٗا وَوَجَدَ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ فَوَفَّىٰهُ
حِسَابَهُۥۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ ٱلۡحِسَابِ ٣٩

"Like a mirage in a lowland which a thirsty person thinks is water until when he reaches it, he finds it is nothing but finds Allāh before him, and He will pay him in full his due, and Allāh is swift in account." [An-Nur:39]

The most contemptible ones are those who are pleased with fake ambitions over true reality and have invited them upon themselves and adorn themselves in such a way. It is –by Allāh– the capital investment of the bankrupt and the business of the idle. It is the sustenance for the desolate souls that have become satisfied with a figment of the imagination over the worthwhile attainment, and with the fictitious hopes over reality, as the poet said:

Wishes, if they were real, they would be the best wishes — and if not, we would have lived through them a comfortable life

This is the most harmful aspect for an individual. It is produced from inability and laziness and it further gives rise to sorrow and remorse. When the wishful thinker misses out on directly partaking in his wishes through his senses, he diverts to carve an image of it on his heart, then he embraces it and holds it tight. Now he is convinced by an illusionary and fantasized image that his imagination has conjured. However, this does not avail him in any way. His similitude is like that of a hungry and thirsty person who imagines an image of food and drink that he is currently eating and drinking. Settling for this and submitting to it indicates the lowliness of the soul and its inferiority. The nobility of a soul, its righteousness, pureness and superiority is in banishing any thought that holds no reality to it, and to never be satisfied that it should cross the mind and abstain from it.

Thoughts are of various categories and they revolve around four foundations:

- Thoughts that are used to evoke some worldly benefits
- Thoughts that are used to repel some worldly harms
- Thoughts that are used to evoke some benefits for one's afterlife
- Thoughts that are used to repel the harms of the afterlife

One should restrict their thoughts, ideas and worries within these four foundations. If one does so, they will not digress elsewhere. But if the thoughts happen to accumulate, a person should put the most important one forward which he fears will pass him by and postpone the less important thought that he does not fear he will lose out on.

There are two other categories left to mention: One of them is important and should not be omitted, and the second one is not as important but should also not be omitted. Each one possesses characteristics that warrant it to be put first which is why hesitation and confusion occur here. If one puts forth the more important one, he fears on missing out on the one of lesser importance, and if he puts forth the one of lesser importance, he misses out on working through the more important one. Additionally, he is met with two issues that cannot be combined together whilst one cannot take place without resigning the other. Here is the time to use the intellect, understanding and knowhow. It is due to the decisions made at this point that determine whose status has been elevated, who succeeds and who loses out. The majority of those you find who glorify the intellects and their own knowhow prefer the less important over the more important issue that cannot be omitted. Nobody is actually completely free of this, but there are those who do it distinctly and frequently and there are others who rarely do it.

Nonetheless, there is a method of arbitration for this, it is the comprehensive principle that the legislation and the settled affairs revolve around, and it is the reference point for the creation and the revelation. It is to place precedence for the overwhelming benefit from the options available, if this is not possible, then one chooses the benefit at the lesser degree until he reaches the lesser of the two evils in order to repel the greater harm. Thus, he omits a benefit in order to reap one that is greater than it, or he chooses an evil in order to avoid the greater evil. The thoughts of an intellectual do not surpass this, and the legislations were revealed to accomplish this, bearing in mind that the benefits in the worldly life and the Hereafter cannot be achieved in any other way. The loftiest, most esteemed and beneficial thoughts are those that are for Allāh and the Hereafter. However, the thoughts for Allāh are various types:

One: The thoughts spent on His revealed verses, contemplating them and understanding the intent from them. Such are the reasons that Allāh revealed them, not merely to be recited, as the recitation is a means for the objective. Some of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) would say: "The Qur'ān was revealed to be implemented, but people took its recitation as the implementation."

Second: The thoughts spent on His visible signs to take moral benefit from them, use them as evidences for His Perfect Names and Attributes, Perfect Wisdom and Benevolence and His Perfect Grace and Generosity. Allāh has encouraged His servants to think about His signs, ponder and understand them, whereas He has dispraised the heedless one for not doing so.

Third: To think about His signs, His benevolence, His wide variety of blessings on His creation and His vast Mercy, Forgiveness and Forbearance.

The three above types produce the knowledge of Allāh, His love, a fear of Him and a hope in His reward within the heart and a continuity of this thought-process alongside the remembrance of Allāh coats the heart in knowledge and love.

Fourth: Thinking about the faults of the soul, its ills and the deficiencies in deeds. This type of thought is immensely beneficial. It is the gateway to good and has a positive influence in breaking the soul that commands with evil. Whenever it breaks, the soul lives tranquilly, becomes rejuvenated and regains control for itself. Thus, the heart is revived, and its statements are now implemented within its kingdom and it sends its troops in pursuit of its benefit.

Fifth: The thoughts spent on how time must be spent, its role and focusing totally on it. The knowledgeable one is he who truly lives the moment, if it is squandered, so are his benefits. All benefits arise from within time. If he wastes it, he will never retrieve it again.

Al-Shāfiʿī said: "I became acquainted with the *Sufis*, however I did not benefit anything from them except two statements: One of them is their quote: "Time is a sword, you must cut it (make good use of it) or else it will cut you.'" He then mentioned their other quote.

An individual's lifespan is made up of the time he has. It is the primary element in his eternal existence in the permanent abode of bliss or the eternal life of despair in the painful torment, and it passes as swiftly as the clouds. Whatever of an individual's life is spent for Allāh and by Allāh's laws, it is the true makeup of his life. Anything other than that is not considered a part of his life, even if he lives a carefree life like the animals. If an individual spends their time in heedlessness and delusional aspirations, the best of which is a life of sleep and idleness, his death is better for him than his life. Likewise, if the individual is in prayer, he does not reap anything from it other than what is for Allāh's sake. Thus, he does not gain anything from his life other than what is by Allāh and for Him.

Anything other than this from the passing thoughts and ideas are either satanic whispers or fake aspirations and false ploys equivalent to the thoughts that afflict the drunken, the spellbound and the obsessed. Their state when reality strikes is like that of the one who says:

If my place in the resurrection with you — and that's all I find, I would have wasted my days.

A wish that was granted to my soul for a period of time — and today I see that it was a mixture of false dreams

Know that the passing of a thought does not harm but summoning and addressing it does. A thought is like a passerby on a path, if you do not summon it and allow it to pass, it leaves you. But if you summon it, it spell-bounds you with its conduct, its trickery and deception. This is the easiest thing that could happen to the idle soul that is void of any activity, and the most difficult upon the honorable, lofty and reassured hearts and souls.

Allāh has placed a soul that commands with evil and a soul that is reassured with good within the makeup of mankind that are both on opposite sides of the spectrum. Anything that comes easy to one of them will be difficult on the other, and anything that one of them finds pleasurable, the other will find pain in. There is nothing harder against the soul that commands with evil than implementing actions for the sake of Allāh and valuing the attainment of His pleasure over its own desires, and at the same time there is nothing more beneficial for it. On the other hand, there is nothing more difficult for the reassured righteous soul than implementing actions for other than Allāh and responding to the enticer of desires whilst there is nothing more harmful to it than that. The Angel continues to be on the right of the heart whilst the devil is on the left and the war is continuous, unrelenting until its time in this world comes to an end. Wars have their appointed times before they cease, all falsehood can be found with Satan and the soul that commands evil, whilst all of truth is with the sovereign King and the reassured righteous soul. These battles are a matter of contest, yet victory comes with patience. Those who are patient, persevere, endure and have piety towards Allāh will have a good end in this life and the Hereafter. Allāh has decreed a judgment that He will not retract that the good end is in piety and for the pious.

So the heart is an empty tablet and one's thoughts are carvings that are carved on it, so how can it befit someone with sound intellect to produce their carvings from either lies, deception, trickery, fake aspirations and a mirage that does not consist of any reality? Which form of wisdom, knowledge or guidance can ever be derived from such carvings? If an individual desires to carve such attributes on the surface of their heart, it would be as if carving beneficial knowledge on an area that is occupied with nonsense. Therefore, if the heart is not rid of the disgraceful thoughts, the beneficial ones will not settle therein, and they will not settle on anywhere that is not pure, as once said:

Desires for her reached me before I knew what desire was — it encountered a
vacant heart and thus gained firm ground

Hence, many people of great conduct have built their conduct upon the safeguarding of their feelings and senses and to disallow any unwanted thoughts to find a firm grounding in their hearts so that the hearts become void and willing to accept the true realities and greater affairs. However, such individuals have safeguarded one thing and missed out on others. They vacated their hearts of any thoughts in totality, so their hearts became empty and were met by Satan, and so he sowed the seeds of falsehood and gave them the impression that they are the highest and noblest thoughts to have. He then placed them in exchange for the thoughts that are the articles of knowledge and guidance. Hence, if the heart is empty of the knowledge and guidance, Satan appears and finds the place vacant and occupies the heart with whatever suits the person. Since he is unable to occupy him with the vilest of acts, he occupies him with dedicating himself towards emptiness, wherein there is no benefit or success in and that it should be the overwhelming feeling in the heart. One should instead occupy himself with whatever Allāh loves and is pleased with and busy one's own heart, knowing about this in detail whilst finding the means to implement it. But Satan has bribed them to leave this and reject it from the angle of abstinence of the worldly life and undertaking necessary means in life and deluded them into thinking that excellence can be sought in absolute emptiness. Impossible!

Excellence can only be found in filling the heart and the inner self with the thoughts, desires and ideas that help one attain the pleasure of the Lord through the individual and the people and contemplating on the methods to reach such a position. Those who have excelled the most are the ones who are most frequently thinking and desiring this, just as the nethermost ones are those who think and yearn the most to attain their own desires wherever they may be. Allāh's aid is sought.

Here we have a fine example from Umar bin al-Khattab who would have a congestion of thoughts in how to please the Lord, perhaps they would appear during his prayer, as he would contemplate on preparing his army during the prayer combining between both holy warfare and the prayer. This is an example of merging multiple acts of worship into one. It is an honorable and noble act that is only known to those who are truthful in their pursuit, well versed in knowledge and someone of high ambitions whereby one can enter one act of worship and profit from multiple acts. They are the blessings of Allāh, He affords them to whoever He wills.

The Utterances

As for utterances, the way to safeguard them is to not utter a loose word. In fact, one should not say anything that does not allow him to gain an advantage or profit in his religion. If one wishes to utter a word, he should first ask: Is there a benefit to it? If there is not, he withholds; and if there is, is there something better to say? If there is, he should not waste it by saying something less beneficial.

If you ever want to provide an evidence for what the heart carries, use the motions and speech of the tongue as proof because it exposes what is in the heart whether the individual wants to or not.

Yahya bin Muʿādh said: "The hearts are like pots; they boil with whatever is in them and the tongues are the spoons. Notice when a man speaks because his tongue will scoop out whatever is in his heart: Sweet or sour, pleasant or bitter or otherwise. The scoop of the tongue identifies the taste of the heart."

Just as you taste what is in the pot using your tongue that allows you to gain real information, likewise you can taste what is in a person's heart from what appears on their tongue just as you taste the contents of the pot with your own tongue.

In a *marfūʿ* narration on the authority of Anas who said: "A person's faith will not be steadfast until their heart is steadfast, and their heart will not be steadfast until their tongue is steadfast."[1]

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad 3/198 [13048].

The Prophet was also asked about the thing that mostly casts the people into the Hellfire, he replied: "The mouth and the private parts."[1] At-Tirmidhī declared this narration as *Ṣaḥīḥ.*

Mu'ādh bin Jabal asked the Prophet to enlighten him on an action that will admit him into Paradise and distance him from the Hellfire. So the Prophet informed him of the head of all matters, the pillar of the religion and the peak of it all, then he said: "Shall I not inform you of the governing factor for all this?" I said, "Do inform, O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ." So he took hold of his tongue and said, (Restrain this). I said, "Prophet of Allāh, will we be taken to account for what we say?" He said, "May your mother be bereaved of you [a statement used by the Arabs to highlight the severity of a matter], O Mu'ādh! Is there anything that throws people into the Hellfire upon their faces — or: on their noses — except the doing of their tongues?"[2] At-Tirmidhī declared this narration as authentic. However, it is strange how a person can find it easy to have restraint and show caution in consuming unlawful things, committing oppression, theft, consuming alcohol and unlawfully looking at things but finds it difficult to show precaution in the statements of the tongue. You may even find someone who is known to be religious, have abstinence and be an avid worshipper yet he says words that anger Allāh that the individual does not pay attention to. He slips-up due to one word a distance further than that between the east and the west! How many people do you see who avoid the immoralities and oppression due to their piety yet unleash their tongues in dishonor of the living and the dead without caring about what he says! If you truly want to know this, look into the narration that has been recorded by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[1] on the authority of Jundub bin Abdullah who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "A man said: 'By Allāh, Allāh will not forgive so and so.' So Allāh said: 'Who is it that swears in My Name that I will not forgive so and so? I have forgiven him and nullified your actions.'"

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2004], Ibn Mājah [4246] al-Bukhārī in al-Adab al-Mufrad [294] and others.

[2] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2616], Ibn Mājah [3973] and al-Imām Aḥmad 5/231 [22016].

This avid worshipper who has devoted themselves to Allāh as much as they have, has had all their actions nullified due to this one word!

There is a similar meaning within the narration on the authority of Abū Hurairah, then Abū Hurairah added to it and said: "He said one word that ruined his worldly life and Hereafter."[2]

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurairah who narrated that the Prophet said: "Indeed, a man utters a word pleasing to Allāh without considering it of any significance for which Allāh exalts his ranks in Paradise, whilst another one speaks a word displeasing to Allāh without considering it of any importance, and for this reason he will sink down into Hell."[3]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim[4]: "A person utters a word thoughtlessly, consequently, he will fall down into the fire of Hell deeper than the distance between the east and the west."

In At-Tirmidhī[5] on the authority of Bilal bin al-Harith al-Muzani who narrated from the Prophet who said: "A man speaks a word pleasing to

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[1] Chapter: The Impermissibility of Making Someone Despair from the Mercy of Allāh [2621].

[2] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [4901]. al-Imām Aḥmad 2/323, 363 [8292,8749]. Ibn Ḥibbān [5712].

[3] Collected by AL-Bukhārī [6478] and Muslim.

[4] [2988], also in al-Bukhārī [6477].

[5] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2319], Ibn Mājah [3969], al-Imām Aḥmad 3/469 [15852]

Allāh without knowing its worth, Allāh records for him His Good Pleasure till the day he will meet Him, and a man utters an evil word without realizing its significance, Allāh records for him His displeasure till the day he will meet Him."

'Alqama used to say: "How much speech have I been prevented from saying because of the narration of Bilal bin al-Harith!"

Also in At-Tirmidhī on the authority of Anas who said: "A man from the Companions passed away, so another man said about him: 'Glad tidings of Paradise.' To which the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: 'You do not know. Perhaps he spoke about what did not concern him or he was greedy with that which would not decrease him.'"[1] At-Tirmidhī declared this narration as *Ḥasan.*

In another wording to the same narration: "A boy was martyred on the day of the battle of *Uhud.* He was found with a stone tied around his stomach from the hunger pains, so the boy's mother wiped the dust from his face and said: 'Glad tidings to you my son, you have Paradise.' The Prophet said: 'How do you know? Perhaps he spoke about what did not concern him, or he was greedy with that which would not decrease him.'"

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurairah in a *marfū'* narration: "Whoever believes in Allāh and the last day should only utter good or remain silent."[2]

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and al-Bukhārī in At-Tarikh [2/106-107], Ibn Ḥibbān [80,281,287].

[1] [2316].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter: Safeguarding the Tongue [6475]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith, Chapter: The Encouragement in Honoring the Neighbor [47].

In another wording in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim[1]: "Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, if he witnesses something, should utter good or remain silent."

At-Tirmidhī[2] recorded via a sound chain of narration that the Prophet said: "From the excellence of the Islām of an individual is to leave what does not concern him."

On the authority of Sufyan bin Abdullah at-Thaqafi who said: "I said: 'Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, tell me something in Islām that I would not need to ask anyone other than you.' He said: 'Say: I believe in Allāh, and then be steadfast.' I then said: 'Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, what is the worst thing you fear for me?' So he took hold of his own tongue, then said: 'This.'"[3] The narration is *Ṣaḥīḥ.*

On the authority of Um Habiba the wife of the Messenger of Allāhﷺ who narrated that the Prophet said: "The speech of the son of Adam is against him, not for him, except in enjoining good, forbidding vice or the remembrance of Allāh."[4] At-Tirmidhī declared this narration as *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ [authentic].*

In another narration: "If the servant wakes up in the morning, all the limbs humble themselves before the tongue and say: 'Fear Allāh for our sake because we are accountable through you. If you are straight, we will be straight, and if you are crooked, we will become crooked.'"[5]

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[1] [1467].

[2] [2317]. Also collected by Ibn Mājah [3976], Ibn Ḥibbān [229].

[3] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith, Chapter: The Comprehensive Descriptions of Islām [38].

[4] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2412], and Ibn Mājah [3974].

[5] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2407].

The Pious Predecessors would hold themselves to account for statements such as: "Today it is hot, or today is cold."

On occasions, some of the major scholars appeared [after their death] to others in their dreams, and so they asked about their current condition. They say: "I am being held to account for a statement I uttered. I said: 'The people are in need of rain!' So it was said to me: 'How do you know? I am more aware of the benefits of My servants.'"

One of the Companions said to his maid one day: "Bring the dining table mat to use it in idle play." Then he said: "I seek forgiveness from Allāh, I never spoke a word except that I restrain it and place reigns on it, except this statement I just uttered, it came out without restraints."[1] Or they were words to this effect.

The easiest movement to make is the movement of the tongue whilst it is also the most harmful to a person. The Pious Predecessors (Salaf) have differed as to whether every utterance of the tongue is recorded amongst the deeds, or is it only the good and the evil that is recorded? There are two opinions in this regard, the first of which is more authentic. Some of the Pious Predecessors said: All the speech of the son of Adam is held against him and not for him except the remembrance of Allāh and anything allied to it.

Abū Bakr As-Siddiq –Allāh be pleased with him- would hold his tongue and say: "This has led me to ruin."

Your speech is your captive, when it exits your mouth you become its captive, and Allāh says about the tongue of anyone who utters a word:

مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

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[1] Collected by Imām Aḥmad 4/123 [17114].

"He does not utter any word except that with him is an observer prepared to record." [Qaf:18]

The tongue also carries two severe ills, if people rid themselves from one, they cannot rid themselves of the other. Each one could possibly be worse than the other at a particular time. As the one who is silent about the truth is a devil without a tongue, disobedient to Allāh, two-faced and deceptive if he does not fear for his own safety, whereas the one who speaks with falsehood is a devil that speaks. Most of creation is devious in their speech and in their silence; thus, they alternate between the two aforementioned types.

As for the people along the middle course –they are those upon the straight path- they withheld their tongues from pronouncing any falsehood and used their tongues in that which earns them benefit in the Hereafter. None of them deem it suitable to utter a word wastefully without any benefit let alone something that will be of harm in the Hereafter. Indeed, an individual will be presented on the Day of Resurrection with good deeds like mountains, yet he will find that his tongue has demolished it all, whilst others will have bad deeds as high as the mountains, yet he will find that his tongue has wiped them all away through the abundance of the remembrance of Allāh and anything related to it.

The Steps

Safeguarding them occurs by way of not taking any footsteps towards anything unrewarding. If there is no increase in reward tied to the footsteps, then remaining stationary and seated is better. One is also able to derive a good deed from every permissible action he traverses towards and sincerely devotes to Allāh, consequently making his footsteps a means of nearness and devotion.

However, when the mistake could potentially be two through the mistake from the feet and the mistake from the tongue, the two became closely associated with each other in the statement of Allāh:

وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلْجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُوا۟ سَلَٰمًا ﴿٦٣﴾

"And the servants of *Ar-Rahman* are those who walk upon the earth humbly, and when the ignorant address them [rudely], they say *Salama* [a word of peace]." [al-Furqan:63]

Here, Allāh describes them with steadfastness in their speech and movements just as He has combined the glances and the passing thoughts in His statement:

يَعْلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ ٱلْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِى ٱلصُّدُورُ ﴿١٩﴾

"He knows the traitorous glance and what the breasts conceal." [Ghafir:19]

The Harms of Fornication and Adultery

This has all been mentioned prior to this in the chapters regarding the forbiddance of immoral acts and the obligation of safeguarding chastity.

The Prophet said: "The thing(s) that mostly casts the people into the Hellfire are the mouth and the private parts."[1]

Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim, the Prophet said: "It is not permissible to establish capital punishment of a Muslim except in three instances [under Muslim law]: the married person who commits adultery, a life for a life, and the one who forsakes his religion and separates from the main body."[2] This narration that associates fornication, disbelief and murder is counterpart to the aforementioned verse in the chapter of al-Furqan and the previously mentioned narration on the authority of Ibn Masʿūd. The Prophet began in sequence of the most frequently performed action and then the one that follows. Fornication occurs more frequently than murder, and murder occurs more often than apostasy. It is also a gradual mention from a major sin to that which is more major.

The harms of adultery and fornication cause a reversal in uprightness of humanity. If the woman commits adultery, she causes shame on her family, husband, and relatives and causes them embarrassment amongst the people. If she becomes pregnant from the fornication and aborts or kills her child, she would have combined the acts of ending a life and fornication. If she places the burden on her husband, she would have introduced someone to them who is foreign and unrelated to them, they would be exposed to this child and he will be secluded with them and ascribed to them when he is not even from their [the husband's] lineage along with other consequences related to this. As for the adultery performed by a man, it also mixes the lineages, ruins the chaste woman and exposes her to corruption and immorality. This major sin contains the potential for ruin in this life and the Hereafter. How many things as a consequence of fornication are deemed as lawful, how many rights are lost and how much oppression befalls!

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [2004], Ibn Mājah [4246] al-Bukhārī in al-Adab al-Mufrad [294] and others

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī [6878] and Muslim [1676].

From the distinctive traits of this act: It introduces poverty, shortens lifespan, and drapes the perpetrator with blackness on the face and a garment of resentment amongst the people.

Also, from its distinctively detrimental effects: It scatters the heart's emotions and causes it illness if not death. It also ignites the feelings of worry, sorrow and fear and distances one from the Angel whilst drawing them closer to Satan.

There is no consequence more evil than that of murder after the consequences for this act. Thus, capital punishment has been legislated in the most severe measures. If an individual was informed that their wife or near female relative had been murdered, it would be easier for him to deal with than if he was informed that she had fornicated.

Sa'd bin 'Ubadah said: "If I saw a man with my wife, I would strike him with the sharp end of my sword." This statement reached the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to which he said: "Do you wonder at Sa'd's sense of honor? Verily, I have more sense of honor than Sa'd, and Allāh has more honor than I. And due to this sense of honor, Allāh has forbidden all immoral acts, apparent and concealed."[1]

Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim on the authority of the Prophet who said: "Indeed, Allāh has honor, surely the believer has honor and the honor of Allāh is violated if the servant commits what He has forbidden him from."[2]

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim on the authority of the Prophet: "None has more sense of honor than Allāh, and for this He has forbidden shameful sins whether committed openly or secretly, none loves a valid excuse from His servants more than Allāh, thus He sent Messengers as bearers of good news and warders. None loves to be praised more than Allāh does, and so He Praises Himself."[3]

Also, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim[4]: The Messenger of Allāhﷺ said during the sermon after the eclipse prayer: "Nation of Muhammadﷺ! By Allāh, there is no one more jealous than Allāh should a male or female slave of His commit adultery. Nation of Muhammadﷺ! If you know what I know, you would laugh a little and cry a lot." Then he raised his hands and said, "Allāh, have I conveyed?"

In mentioning this major sin in particular after the eclipse prayer there is a marvelous secret that can be unraveled for those who ponder. The prevalence of fornication and adultery is from the signs of world destruction, and it is from the signs of the Final Hour as has been reported by Anas in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim wherein he said: "I will narrate something to you I heard from Allāh's Messenger and none other than I will tell you of it. I heard Allāh's Messenger say, "From among the signs of the Hour is religious knowledge will be removed, ignorance will increase; drinking alcoholic will prevail, illegal sexual intercourse will be obvious, men will decrease in number, and women will increase in number, so much so that fifty women will be under the guardianship of one man."[1]

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[1] Narrated by al-Mughirah bin Shu'bahh. Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Capital Punishments [6846]. Also collected by Muslim [1499].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Marriage [5223], and Muslim in The Book of Repentance [2761].

[3] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of *Tafsir* (Qur'ān exegesis) [4634]. Collected by Muslim in The Book of Repentance [2760].

[4] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of the Eclipse, Chapter: Giving Charity During an Eclipse [1044]. Collected by Muslim in The Book of Eclipse, Chapter: The Eclipse Prayer [901].

The way of Allāh, The Most Sublime, throughout time as it relates to His creation is that in the event of a prevalence of fornication, Allāh becomes angry and His anger intensifies. Thus, it is inevitable that the result of His anger manifests itself on the earth in the form of a punishment. Abdullah bin Mas'ūd said: "Usury and fornication never become prevalent in a township except that Allāh grants permission for it to be destroyed." One of the Jewish Rabbis witnessed one of his children harass a woman, so he said: "Be cautious my son, be cautious my son." Consequently, he fell from his bed, broke his spine and his wife had a miscarriage. It was then said to him: "Is that how you become angry for My sake? You shall never receive a Rabbi from your loins (offspring)."

Allāh specified the reprimand for fornication in three aspects amongst all other reprimands. First: capital punishment in the worst possible way. However, in the case of the lesser form, it is a combination between a punishment exerted on the body through lashes and a punishment on the heart in being banished from the homeland for one year.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Knowledge, Chapter: The Disappearance of Knowledge and The Prevalence of Ignorance [80,81], and Muslim in The Book of Knowledge, Chapter: The Disappearance of Knowledge [2671].

Second: Allāh has prohibited His servants from having pity for the perpetrators in the religion of Allāh in a manner that will prevent them from exerting the reprimand because it is from His Compassion and Mercy that He has ordained such reprimands. He is more Merciful than you, yet His mercy does not prevent Him from ordaining this penalty so the compassion you hold in your hearts should not prevent you from executing His commands. Such feelings may apply to each and every penalty; however, it was particularly mentioned in relation to the reprimand of fornication and adultery due to the dire need for it. The people do not find the same sense of harshness and sternness towards the fornicator as they would feel towards the thief, the one who maligns the honor of someone else or the one who consumes alcohol. Their hearts express mercy towards the fornicator more than it would towards any other perpetrator of a crime, and reality testifies to this. Therefore, they have been prohibited from expressing this form of compassion that may lead them to cease the legislated penalties.

The reason for this mercy is that this particular sin occurs from the nobles, the middle-class and the lower classes. The souls have a motive for it, there are many participating in it and most of the reasons for it are a result of infatuation, whilst the hearts are fashioned into having mercy for the one trialed with infatuation and many consider helping the one infatuated as an act of obedience and worship, even if the object they are infatuated by is unlawful for them. One should not disregard this reality as it is firmly rooted within those whom Allāh wills. We have been told of many stories in this regard.

Additionally, this is a type of sin that mainly takes place after the consent of both parties, not through transgression, oppression, forcefulness or otherwise from the things that shock people. It also consists of an overwhelming urge, and so such feelings can be envisaged by others, and consequently there may arise a sense of mercy that obstructs the establishment of the penalty.

However, all this is due to a weakness in faith. Excellence in faith is in finding the strength to implement the command of Allāh and finding the mercy within oneself towards the one being penalized, in which case a person yields to the command and mercy of his Lord.

Third: Allāh has commanded that their reprimand be before the eyes of the believers, not in seclusion out of view from others. That is more comprehensive in achieving the desired benefit from the reprimand and it is part of the wisdom behind the deterrent. The reprimand for the adulterer is derived from the punishment that Allāh delivered to the people of Lot who were pelted with stones. That is due to the shared common ground between fornication and sodomy in their immorality, each of which contain an evil that contradicts the objective and wisdom of Allāh amongst His creation and His commands.

After careful scrutiny, it should be said: If the one who has been trialed with this catastrophe repents and is granted a sincere repentance and the opportunity to perform righteous actions, becomes a more righteous person in his latter years than he was in his earlier years, exchanges his misdeeds for good ones, cleanses the disgrace with various forms of obedience, diverts his gaze from anything unlawful, safeguards his chastity from anything illegitimate and is truthful with Allāh in his dealings with Him, such an individual shall be forgiven and is from those to enter Paradise. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins, and since a sincere repentance eradicates every sin, even polytheism, the murder of Prophets and other righteous allies of Allāh, sorcery, disbelief and otherwise, it does not fail to eradicate such a misdeed.

It has been firmly established as a result of the perfect Wisdom, Justice, and Virtue of Allāh that the repentant one is like someone who does not have any sin. Allāh has further guaranteed to exchange the sins of the polytheist, the murderer and the fornicator into good deeds upon repentance. Allāh has said:

۞ قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُواْ مِن رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًاۚ
إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾

"Say, 'My servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He *al-Ghafur Ar-Rahīm*." **[Az-Zumar:53]**

Hence, not even one sin is excluding from this generality, however it is something specifically afforded to the repentant ones.

Many Are Denied a Good End in Their Final Moments

If you notice the condition of many of those who are approaching their final moments in this life, you find that they are obstructed from a good end as a punishment for them in recompense for their evil deeds. al-Hafiz Abū Muhammad Abdul-Haq bin Abdur-Rahman al-Ishbili said:

"Know that a terrible end –Allāh grant us refuge from it– has reasons, paths and gates that lead to it. The most significant of which is a devotion to the worldly life and a diversion from the Hereafter along with a boldness and audacity to disobey Allāh. It could be that a particular mistake, or a type of sin has overwhelmed an individual, or a portion of deviation or some audacity and boldness to sin that seizes their heart captures their mind, extinguishes its light and drapes it with the veil. In which case, a reminder is of no benefit nor does an admonition take effect on them. Thus, it is possible that death approaches such an individual whilst they are in this state and they hear the call from a distance, but they are unaware of the intent and do not know what has been intended even if the caller echoes the call and repeats."

He said: It has been reported that a man from the soldiers of An-Nasir approached death, so his son said to him: "Say Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh." He replied: "An-Nasir is my master." His son repeated the request, but his father said the same thing. He then fainted and when he regained consciousness he said: "An-Nasir is my master." This is how he continued, every time he was requested to say "Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh," he replied: "An-Nasir is my master." Then he said to his son: "So and so, An-Nasir knows you by your sword, murder, murder." He then died.

Abdul-Haq also said: It was said to someone else whom I know: "Say Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh," so he replied: "Mend such and such in that particular building, do such and such in that garden."

He also said: Abū At-Tahir as-Silafi permitted me to convey a story of a man who approached his death and it was said to him: "Say Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh," but instead he said in Persian: "Da Yazada," which means: "Ten, eleven."

It was also said to someone else: "Say La Ilāha Illa Allāh," but he replied: "How do I get to *Hamam Minjab?*"

There is a story behind the above statement, it is one of a man who was standing adjacent to his home and the shape of his door resembled the door of *al-Hamam,* when a woman who had a beautiful appearance passed by him and asked him: "What is the way to *Hamam Minjab?"* He then chose to mislead her in his home and said: "This is the way to *Hamam Minjab,"* before she entered the house and he followed her in. When she found herself inside his house and she realized that he tricked her, she openly displayed happiness and joy in their coming together, but she said that it would be much more befitting if we had some pleasantries with us and something that delights the eye. He then said to her: "I will bring you whatever you want and desire right now." So he left in pursuit of these things and left her in the house without locking it. He obtained what he needed and returned to find that she left without taking a single item with her. At which point, the man began to worry a lot and frequently mentioned her, and he began to walk along the streets and alleyways saying:

O' the one who once said whilst she was exhausted — what is the way to
Hamam Minjab

As he was repeating these words of distress one day, a woman responded to him from a window:

If only you had been able to gain her — through securing the home or locking the door

Nonetheless, his passion increased and the stimulation within him raged violently, and he continued in this manner until his final words in this life were from the above lines of poetry.

He also said: It has been reported that a man became infatuated with someone (by the name of Aslam) and found it difficult whilst the love for this person had taken over the heart, and he became bedridden as a result. However, this individual whom he was infatuated with was prevented from meeting with him and became distant. Nonetheless, intermediaries tried to unite the pair until the other individual agreed to see him. The despondent one was informed of this promise and became elated, his joy intensified, he was relieved of his anxiety and he began to wait patiently for the meeting. At which point, the intermediary approached to convey a message and said, "He followed me for most of the journey to you before retreating, so I went back to speak to him," but he said: "He mentioned me and became troubled due to my absence, and I do not wish to be involved in dubious activity and I do not wish to place myself in suspicious predicaments." So I repeated the request but he refused and departed. When the despondent one heard this account, he dropped the contents in his hand and returned to a more severe condition than he was in, and the signs of death became visible on him, so he said:

O' Aslam, the relief to my illness — and the remedy for the meager

Your pleasure is more beloved to my heart — than the Mercy of the exalted Creator

I said to him: "So and so, fear Allāh." He replied: "Previously." So I left his presence and I did not even pass the door to exit before hearing the commotion of his death. We seek refuge in Allāh from a terrible and evil end to our lives.

On a particular night, Sufyan at-Thawrī wept until the morning. When the morning came, he was asked: "All this in fear of sins?" So he grabbed a handful of straw from the ground and said: "Sins are insignificant in comparison to this, rather, I weep from a fear of a bad end." Undoubtedly, this is from the greatest display of a good understanding for a man to fear that his misdeeds will expose him at the moment of death, consequently denying him a good end to life.

Al-Imām Aḥmad narrates on the authority of Abū Ad-Darda that when he approached his death in the final moments of his life, he experienced momentary loss of consciousness, and when he would regain consciousness he would recite:

وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَٰرَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِى طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ۝١١٠

"And We will turn away their hearts and their eyes just as they refused to believe in it the first time, and We will leave them in their transgression wandering blindly." [al-An'ām:110]

Due to this, the Pious Predecessors feared that sins would intervene between them and a good end.

He further stated: "Know that a terrible end –may Allāh grant us refuge from it- does not befall someone who is openly steadfast and internally righteous. That is unheard of, and all praise is due to Allāh. It befalls those who have a corruption of creed, or persistence upon major sins or a liking to grave acts. All of which could possibly overcome him until he is struck by death before making repentance, seizing him before rectifying his inner-self and ceasing his existence in this life before returning to Allāh, allowing Satan to take advantage in that situation and snatching him during that moment of confusion. Refuge is sought from Allāh."

He also said: "It has been narrated that there was a man who once lived in Egypt who would constantly be present in the mosque to deliver the call to prayer and perform the daily prayers. There was a brightness of obedience and a light of worship that was visible on his face. One day, he climbed the minaret as usual to perform the call to prayer, and situated beneath this minaret was the house of a Christian family, so he looked inside from above and saw the daughter of the homeowner. He became enchanted by her and left the call to prayer to go and see her and entered her home. She said to him: 'What is the matter with you? What do you want? He replied: "I want you," and she then said: 'What do you want me for?' He said: 'You have captured my mind and won over my heart.' she replied: 'I will never comply to you in a dubious manner.' So the man said: 'In that case, marry me,' however she replied: 'You are a Muslim and I am a Christian, and my father will never marry me off to you,' so he complied and said: 'So I will become a Christian,' to which she replied: 'If you do so, I will comply.' Thereafter, the man became a Christian so he could marry her, and he stayed in their home thereafter. On the same day, he climbed to the roof of the house for something and fell off it and died. In the end, he did not gain the woman and he lost his religion."

Reflect Over the Final Outcome of the Rebellious People Who the Prophet Lūṭ Was Sent To

They approached the Prophet Lūṭ when they heard that some guests who were from the most handsome of people had come to visit him, so the sodomites hurriedly loomed towards them. When Prophet Lūṭ saw them, he said to them:

يَٰقَوۡمِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطۡهَرُ لَكُمۡۖ ٧٨

"My people! These are my daughters [womenfolk of the city], they are purer for you." [Hud:78]

Here he presents his womenfolk in place of his own guests, so that they may marry them, in fear for himself and his guests and the deep disgrace it would cause, he went on to say:

يَٰقَوۡمِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطۡهَرُ لَكُمۡۖ فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُخۡزُونِ فِي ضَيۡفِيٓۖ أَلَيۡسَ مِنكُمۡ رَجُلٞ رَّشِيدٞ ٧٨

"My people! These are my daughters [womenfolk of the city], they are purer for you. So fear Allāh and do not disgrace me concerning my guests. Is there not among you a man of reason?" [Hud:78]

But they only offered him a response of tyranny and stubbornness:

قَالُوا لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا لَنَا فِى بَنَاتِكَ مِنْ حَقٍّ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ

"They said: 'You already know that we have not any claim to your daughters, and indeed you know what we want." [Hud:79]

Thereafter, the Prophet of Allāh made an exclamation of someone who is overwhelmed, and it came forth from a distressed and saddened heart, he said:

قَالَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِى بِكُمْ قُوَّةً أَوْ آوِى إِلَىٰ رُكْنٍ شَدِيدٍ

"If only I had against you some power or could take support from a strong family." [Hud:80]

Subsequently, the Angels relieved him and uncovered the actual plan and informed him they are not the kind of creation that can be violated, nor can he be violated due to their protection of him, so do not fear them or pay them any mind and calm yourself. They said:

قَالُواْ يَٰلُوطُ إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَن يَصِلُوٓاْ إِلَيْكَۖ ﴿٨١﴾

"Lūṭ, indeed we are messengers of your Lord, they will never reach you," [Hud:81] and they conveyed the glad tidings to him of the promise to him and the inevitable punishment of his people who did wrong.

They said:

فَأَسْرِ بِأَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ ٱلَّيْلِ وَلَا يَلْتَفِتْ مِنكُمْ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَكَ إِنَّهُۥ مُصِيبُهَا مَآ أَصَابَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ مَوْعِدَهُمُ ٱلصُّبْحُ ۚ ﴿٨١﴾

"So go with your family during a portion of the night and let not any among you look back – except your wife; indeed she will be struck by that which strikes them. Indeed, their appointment is in the morning." [Hud:81]

However, Prophet Lūṭ sensed that the appointed time for their destruction was slow coming and said that he wanted it to be sooner, so the Angels responded to him by asking the rhetorical question:

أَلَيْسَ ٱلصُّبْحُ بِقَرِيبٍ ﴿٨١﴾

"Is not the morning near." [Hud:81]

By Allāh, the only time that separated between the demise of the enemies of Allāh and the salvation of His Prophet and righteous allies was the time between the early morning dawn and daybreak before their entire land was uprooted from its foundations, raised to the sky until the Angels heard the barking of their dogs and the braying of their donkeys before the plan that cannot be repelled took its course from the The Lord *al-Jalil,* as instructed to His servant and messenger Angel Jibrīl to tilt it upside down, as has been informed in the revelation:

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَٰلِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٨٢﴾

"So when Our command came, We made the highest part [of the city] its lowest and rained upon them stones of layered hard clay." [Hud:82]

Thus, He made them a sign for the rest of creation, an admonishment for the people of piety and an example and predecessor for anyone who partakes in their actions from the wrongdoers and made their dwellings a sign along the path for whoever treads it.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَٰتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَإِنَّهَا لَبِسَبِيلٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

"Indeed, in that are signs for those who discern. And indeed those cities are on an established road. Indeed, in that is a sign for the believers." [al-Hijr:75-77]

He powerfully seized them whilst they were asleep, and it approached them whilst they were living in their intoxication wandering blindly, and what they used to do was of no avail to them consequently turning their pleasures into pain, and they became tormented thereafter.

Aspirations in this life that were deemed nice — but after death they became torment

The pleasures have vanished and been followed by sorrow. The urge has ended and resulted in distress. They enjoyed themselves for a short while and are punished for a long time. They indulged in luxuries and it resulted in a painful torment. They became drunk with the intoxication of that desire and did not regain consciousness from it until they were in the abode of the tormented. They were tranquilized by the heedlessness and didn't wake up until they were in the abode of the doomed ones. They regret it all -by Allāh- to the furthest degree at a time when regret is of no avail and they cried over what they used to do with tears of blood.

ذُوقُواْ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

"Taste what you used to earn," [Az-Zumar:24]

And

ٱصْلَوْهَا فَٱصْبِرُوٓا۟ أَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوا۟ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

"Reach therein, be patient or impatient, it is all the same for you. You are only recompensed for what you used to do." [At-Tur:16]

Furthermore, Allāh has closely correlated between that nation and any other nation or group of people who partake in the same activity in His statement that warns them against the punishment:

وَمَا هِىَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٍ ﴿٨٣﴾

"And Allāh's punishment is not from the wrongdoers very far." [Hud:83]

The Remedy to a passionate Infatuation is Through two Means

If it is asked: After all of this, is there any remedy to this fatal illness, and is there an exorcism to this lethal spell? What does one resort to in repelling this poison? Is there any path to success and guidance and can the drunken one from the intoxication of desire regain consciousness?

Can the infatuated one re-own his heart after the passion has reached its depths? Is the doctor able to employ a method for the cure from this terrible disease?

If this individual is blamed, he finds pleasure in it because the one he loves is mentioned and if he is rebuked, he is stirred by it and continues in the path towards his aim. His condition cries out and his tongue says:

My desires reached as far as you were — I will not go further or stop before

You belittled me, so I endeavored to belittle myself — the one who is belittled to you cannot be noble

You now resemble an enemy, so I began to love them — if I gain from them what I gain from you

I find that being blamed because of you is pleasant — because you are mentioned, so let the blamers blame me

Perhaps this was the objective behind the initial question and the illness that the cure is sought for.

We declare: Yes, the general answer can be found in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of Usāmah bin Shurayk who narrated that the Prophet said: "Indeed, Allāh never decreed an illness, except that He also decreed its cure. Those who know it, know so, and those who are ignorant of it, are ignorant of it."

The approach towards the remedy for this illness is from two angles:

One: Terminating it before it occurs

Second: Removing it after it occurs

Both are easy for the person whom Allāh has ordained it easy for, and impossible for the one whom Allāh does not aid, as all affairs are in His Hands.

As far as the preventative measure from being afflicted by this illness, they are through two means:

One: Diverting the gaze, as previously mentioned. Indeed, the glance is a poisoned arrow from the arrows of Iblis (Satan). So whoever unleashes their sight shall experience prolonged sorrow. Diverting the gaze contains numerous benefits and it is a part of this beneficial remedy.

One benefit is: It is compliance to the commands of Allāh, which is the pinnacle of a servant's joy in his worldly life and the afterlife. There is nothing more beneficial for an individual in this life or the Hereafter than complying with the commands of Allāh The Most High. None have found true happiness unless they adhere to His commands, and none have ever found despair in this life and the Hereafter except by way of violating His commands.

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[1] 4/278 [18456]

Second benefit: It prevents the effect of the poisoned arrow that may contain his destruction from ever reaching his heart.

Third benefit: It provides the heart a connection with Allāh and a focus towards Him. Undoubtedly, unleashing the sight scatters, divides and distances the heart from Allāh. Moreover, there is nothing more harmful than unleashing the eyesight as it causes separation between the servant and his Lord.

Fourth benefit: It strengthens the heart and gives it happiness, just as unleashing the sight weakens the heart and saddens it.

Fifth benefit: It earns a light within the heart just as unleashing it earns it darkness. This is why Allāh has mentioned the 'verse of light' in succession to the matter of diverting the gaze, He said:

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّواْ مِنْ أَبْصَٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُواْ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ﴿٣٠﴾

"Say to the believers, 'divert your sight and safeguard your private parts." [An-Nur:30]

After the aforementioned verse, He said:

۞ ٱللَّهُ نُورُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ كَمِشْكَوٰةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۖ ﴿٣٥﴾

"Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth, the similitude of His light is like a niche and within it a lamp," [An-Nur:35] i.e., the similitude of His light in the heart of His believing servant that has complied with His commands and avoided His prohibitions. If the heart has been illuminated, good will proceed from every side, just as if the heart is darkened, the clouds of calamity and evil loom from every place from the various innovations and misguidances, an adherence to false desires, avoidance of guidance, refusing the means to bliss or occupying oneself with the reason of wretchedness! The light that is within the heart can remove all this. However, if this light is missing, the individual continues as a blind person who wanders amongst the pitch-black darkness.

Sixth benefit: It produces a truthful discernment that is used to distinguish between the right and the wrong and the truthful and the fraudulent. Shuja' al-Kirmani used to say: "Whoever fills their outwardly state with the adherence to the *Sunnah* and his inner-self with constant piety, diverts his gaze from the unlawful sights, withholds himself from false desires and nourishes himself with lawful means, his discernment shall not fail him." Shuja' was someone whose discernment did not fail him.

Allāh The Exalted recompenses His servant for his action from what the person earns for himself, and whoever abandons something for the sake of Allāh shall be recompensed by Allāh with something better than it. Thus, if someone diverts their sight from the unlawful matters, Allāh shall recompense him by casting the light of insight within him for imprisoning his sight for the sake of Allāh and opens the gate of knowledge, faith, truthful and accurate discernment that is only attained through the insight of the heart. The opposite of this is the state of the sodomites that Allāh has described whereby their blindness prevented them from gaining insight. Allāh said:

لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

"Indeed, they were in their intoxication wandering blindly." [al-Hijr:72]

He described them as intoxicated, which is the definition of a spoiled mind, and the blindness that is the spoiling of insight.

Hence, an infatuation with images spoils the mind, causes a blindness of insight and an intoxication of the heart, as the poet has said:

Drunk with an intoxication of desires and an intoxication of addiction —
when is the awakening for the one who is drunk?

Another said:

They say I have turned mad from the one I desire, so I said to them —
Passionate obsession is more than what the mad people have (the difference
is) One cannot regain consciousness from passionate obsession — whereas the
mad one may be affected for only a moment

Seventh benefit: It provides the heart with resolve, courage and strength. Thus, Allāh combines a dominating ability and strength, as has been reported in the narration: "The one who disregards his desires, the devil flees from his shadow." Contrary to this, you will find that the one who obeys their desires will carry humiliation, lowliness, insignificance, vileness and worthlessness in their soul that Allāh gives the one who disobeys Him, as al-Hasan said: "Even if they are obeyed by their mules, and the they ride their horses swiftly, the humiliation of sin never leaves them. Allāh chooses to humiliate anyone who disobeys Him."

Allāh has declared honor to be closely connected with His obedience, and humiliation is connected to His disobedience. He said:

وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝٨

"To Allāh belongs all honor, and to His Messenger and to the believers." [al-Munafiqun:8]

and He said:

وَلَا تَهِنُواْ وَلَا تَحْزَنُواْ وَأَنتُمُ ٱلْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝١٣٩

"So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are believers." [Aal-ʿImrān:139].

Faith (*Īmān*) is statement and action, both inward and outward. Allāh also said:

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ ٱلْكَلِمُ ٱلطَّيِّبُ وَٱلْعَمَلُ ٱلصَّـٰلِحُ يَرْفَعُهُۥ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ
يَمْكُرُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۖ وَمَكْرُ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُوَ يَبُورُ ﴿١٠﴾

"Whoever desires honor, then to Allāh belongs all honor, to Him ascends good speech and righteous work He raises it." [Fatir:10]

Whoever seeks honor should request it through the obedience of Allāh, His remembrance, good speech and righteous work.

As occurs in the supplication of *al-Qunūt*: "He is not humiliated whom You have allied, and he is not honored whom You have opposed."[1] Whoever obeys Allāh shall be allied with Him in whatever he obeys Him in and shall gain honor in accordance to his obedience. Whoever disobeys Him shall receive enmity in whatever he has disobeyed Him in and shall be humiliated in accordance.

Eighth benefit: It blocks Satan's entrance into the heart as he enters through the glance and surges in quicker than a gust of wind in an empty space. He begins by beautifying the image being viewed, adorning it and making it an idol that the heart devotes itself to. Then he promises him and stirs him and stimulates the heart with the burning flame of desire before presenting the fuel for the fire that is the sins that one cannot achieve except by way of this image, thus the heart becomes enflamed. From these flames are the exhalations of fire and effects of burns. Indeed, the heart has been enveloped with a flame from every angle, so it is like a sheep in the middle of a furnace. This is why the punishment of the people who have been infatuated by unlawful images is a burning fire in their graves that their souls shall feel until the Resurrection, as the narration that has been collected by al-Bukhārī and Muslim that highlighted the Prophet's dream clearly portrayed.

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[1] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [1425,1426], Ibn Mājah [1178], At-Tirmidhī [464], al-Imām Aḥmad 1/199,200 [1718,1721].

Ninth benefit: It clears the heart so that it can think about its benefits and preoccupy itself with them. Unleashing the sight scatters this thought process and intervenes between it, so he neglects this cause and falls into desires and a heedlessness from the remembrance of His Lord. Allāh said:

وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾

"...and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desires and his affair is ever in neglect." [al-Kahf:28]

Indeed, unleashing the sight induces these three affairs in due measure. Tenth benefit: Between the eyes and the heart is an opening and a passage that affects the other, each can either rectify or corrupt the other. Hence, if the heart becomes corrupt, so does the sight, and if the sight becomes corrupt, so does the heart. The same applies with regards to rectification. If the eye becomes corrupt, the heart also becomes corrupt and ruined and turns into a container for rubbish and a place to unload any impurities, obscenity or dirt. At that point, it becomes unbefitting to contain the knowledge of Allāh, a love for Him, devotion to Him, closeness to Him and a joy at gaining a nearness to Him. Rather, the opposite can only reside within such a heart.

This is a reference to some of the benefits of diverting the gaze from unlawful things and can provide some insight into the reasons for some of the illnesses.

The Second Approach Towards the Remedy

Preoccupying the heart with a repellent or something that will intervene between the individual and the sin. This is attained either through an apprehensive fear or a stirring love. Whenever the heart does not have the fear of losing out on something that if obtained is more harmful than attaining the thing they love or a fear of attaining something that would be more harmful than missing out on their beloved object, or a love for something that is more beneficial to him than this beloved object whilst losing out on, then it is more harmful than losing out on this beloved object. If the state is like this, the individual will inevitably have a passionate infatuation for images.

Explaining the above is as follows. The soul shall not leave something it loves unless it is for something it loves more, or due to a fear of being afflicted with something that brings more harm than the passing of this beloved object. In this case, the individual is in need of two things, if both or one of them is missing, they shall not be of benefit to themselves.

One of these things is precise insight that he can use in distinguishing the difference between something loved and something detested, so that he may value the most beloved over the other and bear the lesser harm to avoid the greater harm. Undoubtedly, this is the role of the mind, and nobody can be considered intellectual if they act in contradiction to this; in fact, animals may be better positioned than such a person.

The second thing is the strength in resolve and patience one can use to remain firm in either partaking in something or abandoning it. Many a time do people recognize the gulf in difference between particular actions, yet they refuse the correct option due to a weakness in the soul or a weakness in determination or conviction to put forth the best choice due to greed, covetousness and depravity of his soul and ambitions. Such a person cannot be of benefit to their selves, nor can anyone else benefit from it.

Allāh has denied leadership in the religion to anyone unless they posses the two qualities of patience and certitude, He said:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَبِمَّةَ يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُواْۖ وَكَانُواْ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ۝٢٤

"And We made from among them leaders guiding by Our command when they were patient and they were certain of our signs." [As-Sajda:24]

This is the individual who benefits from their knowledge and the people too gain benefit from it. However, someone who is opposite to this shall not benefit from their knowledge and neither will others benefit from it. There are some who are a benefit to their own selves but not to others. The difference is that the first type of person treads a path in his own light and the people walk alongside him in this light, and the second type is walking in darkness and those who follow him also walk in this darkness. As for the third type [who only benefits himself], he walks in his light alone.

The Heart Can Never Combine a Love for Allāh, The Most High, and a Passion for Images and Lewd Desires

Once you have absorbed this prelude, then you should also know that the heart will not combine the love for One Who is loved above all [in worship] and an infatuation for images. These are two opposites that do not meet, and one must leave. Thus, whoever's strength of love is devoted to The One Who is loved above all, and any love to anyone else is deemed false and a torment for the individual, this love to Him diverts an individual from loving someone else. If an individual does happen to love other than Him, it is only a love for the sake of Allāh, or a means to it or something that cuts off from whatever opposes or nullifies his love.

Truthful love necessitates singling Allāh in love without associating anyone else with Him in love. If the one being loved was from amongst the creation, he would become haughty and jealous if the love that is being devoted to him is shared with someone else, and he would detest the one who does this, distance him, not allow him to be near him and consider him dishonest in his love even though he is not able to divert his love towards himself. So how would it be in the case of One Who should be loved above all and whose love should not be diverted to anyone but Him, whilst any love to anyone else is a torment and harm to the person? This is why Allāh does not forgive the one who associates partners with Him in the worship of love and forgives anything else that is lesser than that.

An infatuation for images causes the servant to lose out on what is more beneficial for them. Moreover, it causes a person to lose out on the love of the One Whom there cannot be any good, blessings or beneficial life without. Choose one of the two, because they cannot be combined together in the heart, nor can they be removed from it together. In fact, the one who recoils from the love of Allāh, His remembrance, and a yearning to meet Him will be trialed with the love of something else, and it will be a source of torment for that individual in the worldly life, the grave and after the Resurrection. Either he is tormented with the love for shrines, or the cross, or an infatuation to fire worship, or a love of young beardless men, or an infatuation to women, or money, or the love of companions and associates or the love of something at a lesser degree that is of utmost worthlessness and insignificance. So a person is a slave to his beloved, whatever it may be! As the poet said:

You are the victim of anything you love — So choose for yourself whoever you want

Therefore, whoever does not take his sovereign ruler and ultimate master as the only true deity to worship, the thing he ends up worshipping will be his own desires. Allāh said:

أَفَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَـٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِۦ وَقَلْبِهِۦ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِۦ
غِشَـٰوَةً فَمَن يَهْدِيهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

"Have you seen the one who has taken as his god his own desire, and Allāh has thus sent him astray upon knowledge and has placed a seal on his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? Who will guide him after Allāh? Will you not then be reminded?" [al-Jathiyah:23]

The Levels of Love

The distinctive bearings of worship are to express love alongside submission and degradation to the one being loved. Whoever loves something and submits to it has consequently devoted his heart in worship to it. In fact, devotion in worship is the final and highest level of love and is also known as ***tatayyum***. However, the first is the level of ***'alāqah*** *(connection),* and it has been named as such due to the *'alaqah* (connection) the heart has with the beloved.

After this level is the one of ***al-sababa*** *(devotion),* and it was named as such due the outpouring of devotion the heart affords the beloved. A poet once said:

Those in love have complained of al-sababa (devotion), I wish — I bore their pain all alone

So my heart could feel all the pleasure of love — that nobody else before me or after me would feel

This is followed by *al-gharam (adherent),* which is the unyielding love expressed by the heart that becomes inseparable from it. This is also why a penalty charge is called *gharīm* due to its inseparability from the person. Also, the statement of Allāh:

إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا۝٦٥

"Indeed, its punishment is ever adhering *[gharama]*." [al-Furqan:65]

Many of the later scholars have used this term in association with love, so the early poets have seldom used it. This level is followed by *al-'ishq* *(passionate infatuation),* which is a wild form of love. Thus, the Lord must never be described as possessing this form of love and the term must never be used pertaining to His Majesty.

Then there is ***al-shawq*** *(a longing),* and it is defined as the eager journey of the heart to the beloved one, and has been used as it relates to The Lord as is the case in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad[1] on the authority of 'Amar bin Yasir who led us in a prayer yet made it concise, so when he was asked about it, he said: "Nonetheless, I still invoked Allāh with an invocation that the Prophet would say: 'O Allāh, by Your Knowledge of the unseen and Your Power over the creation, keep me alive so long as You know that living is good for me and cause me to die when You know that death is better for me. O Allāh, cause me to fear You in secret and in public. I ask You to make me true in speech in times of pleasure and of anger. I ask You to make me moderate in times of wealth and poverty. And I ask You for everlasting delight and joy that will never cease. I ask You to make me pleased with that which You have decreed and for an easy life after death. I ask You for the sweetness of looking upon Your face and a *longing* to meet You in a manner that does not entail a calamity that will bring about harm or a trial that will cause deviation. O Allāh, beautify us with the adornment of faith and make us among those who guide and are rightly guided.'"

It has also been reported in another narration: "The *longing* of my righteous servant to see Me has been a long one, and I want to see them even more." This corresponds in meaning to the statement of the Prophet wherein he says: "Whoever loves to see Allāh, Allāh loves to see him."[2]

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[1] 4/264 [18325]. Also collected by An-Nisaa'i [1306].

[2] This narration is on the authority of 'Ubadah bin As-Samit and has been collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter: Whoever Loves to See Allāh, Allāh

Some of the people of insight have noted in their exegesis of the statement of Allāh:

مَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ لِقَآءَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ لَآتٍۚ ﴿٥﴾

"Whoever hopes for the meeting with Allāh, indeed, the term decreed by Allāh is coming." [al-'Ankabut:5]

Since Allāh knows the intensity of the longing to see Him within the hearts of His righteous allies and that their hearts will not be content unless they meet Him, He declared that there would be an appointed time for His meeting so their souls can find rest.

The most pleasant and delightful life of all is the life of those who love Allāh, are at ease with Him and long to meet Him. Their life is the truly pleasant one in reality and there is no other life that is more pleasant, blessed or satisfying than theirs. It is the pleasant life that is mentioned in the statement of Allāh:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةًۖ ﴿٩٧﴾

"Whoever does good deeds, whether male or female and is a believer, We shall grant them a pleasant life." [An-Nahl:97]

The intended meaning here is not the life that is common between the believers and the unbelievers or between the righteous and the immoral from the various forms of food, clothing, drinks and marriages, the type of life in which the enemies of Allāh may possess many times as much as the pious allies of Allāh. Additionally, Allāh has guaranteed that He will grant anyone who performs righteous deeds with a pleasant life. He

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Loves to See Him [6507]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of Remembrance and Supplication, Chapter: Whoever Loves to See Allāh [2683].

is the most truthful in His promise Who never fails on His promise. Which life is better than the life of a person whose worries have all united and become one concern directed towards attaining the pleasure of Allāh, gathered the scattered feelings of his heart through the devotion to Allāh, whose intentions and thoughts that were once divided- each scattered in a different valley- are now focused on Allāh. So the remembrance of the Most Beloved, the love to Him and the longing to meet Him and the comfort in being near to him becomes overwhelming over him. His concern, intentions and objectives and the feelings of his heart revolve around all this. If he remains quiet, he does so for Allāh's sake, and if he speaks, he speaks for the sake of Allāh. If he hears, it is through the guidance of Allāh, if he sees, it is through the guidance of Allāh. Through this guidance he grasps, he walks, he moves and he remains still. Through it he lives, he dies and he is resurrected as has been collected in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī on the authority of the Prophet who conveys from his Lord that He said: "And the most beloved thing with which My slave comes nearer to Me is what I have enjoined upon him; and My slave continues to comes closer to Me through performing supererogatory acts till I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks, and if he asks (something) from Me, I give him, and if he seeks My Protection (refuge), I protect him. I have never withheld [in a manner that befits His Majesty] from anything I do as much as I withhold [in a manner that befits His Majesty] from taking the soul of My believing servant, he dislikes death and I dislike to upset him, nonetheless, it is an inevitable occurrence."[1]

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurairah in The Book of Heart Softeners, Chapter of Humbleness [6502].

This noble and divine narration is one that those of stubborn character and a blind heart denied themselves from understanding and knowing the intent behind. He has compiled the reasons for attaining His love in two affairs: Implementing the obligations and drawing closer to Him through supererogatory acts of worship.

Allāh has informed that performing the obligatory acts of worship are the most beloved means that any of those who are near to Him can use as a means of drawing closer, followed by the supererogatory acts. Also, the one who expresses this love continues to increase in performing the supererogatory acts until he becomes beloved to Allāh. If he reaches a point wherein he is beloved to Allāh, this love from Allāh grants the individual an extra found love for Allāh that exceeds the initial love. Hence, this love occupies his heart for any ideas or worries from diverting him from his main love, it captures the soul and does not leave any room for any other beloved one. Thus, his most beloved one becomes the reigning figure over his heart and is overpowering his soul.

There is no doubt that if this individual hears, he does so with his beloved one, if he sees, he sees with him, if he grasps, he grasps with him and if he walks, he walks with him. The thought of him is constantly in his heart, he accompanies him, finds comfort in being with him and befriends him (with guidance and protection). The letter *'ba'* that is used in this context refers to accompaniment. It is an accompaniment unparalleled to any other and cannot be comprehended through mere information or a knowledge that it exists. The matter is one that needs to be experienced, not just known about.

As some have said:

Your image is in my mind and your mention is on my tongue — your
dwelling is in my heart, where can you escape?

Another of them said:

It is strange that I feel compassion for them — and I ask about them whomever I find yet they are with me
My eye seeks them out whilst they are inside it — and my heart longs for them yet they are within my chest

That is subtler than the statement of some others:

If I say you are gone, my heart will not believe me — as you are within it, the secret place, you will not escape it

Or if I say you are not gone, my thoughts will say you have lied — I am confused between the truth and the lies

Hence, there is nothing closer to the one who is in love than the beloved, and the love may even establish itself until it becomes closer to the person than his own self by forgetting himself and failing to forget the beloved. As one poet said:

I want to forget her but — it is as if Layla manifests to me on every path

Another one said:

It is demanded of the heart to forget you — but the ego fails to do so

If we return to the aforementioned narration, we see that the hearing, the sight, the hand and the leg are mentioned because these are the body parts used for comprehension and action, whilst the hearing and the sight convey the likes and dislikes to the heart and induce the love and hate to it and the hands and the feet are also used in this. So if a person's and sight [missing word? "hearing"] are through the guidance of Allāh and both are preserved within the limbs that are used to comprehend and maintained in his love and hate, it will likewise be preserved in his hand movements and his walking.

Contemplate over how He has sufficed in mentioning the hearing and the sight and the hands and the feet over the tongue. Notice how one can comprehend through hearing that occurs willingly at times and unwillingly at others, and the eyesight that tends to occur suddenly without choice, likewise the hands and the feet that the individual must use. How then is the state of the tongue that does not act without the free will and choice of the person that he can choose to not use in any prohibited act? Moreover, the reactions of the tongue from the heart are more telling than the reactions of the other body parts as it is the transmitter and conveying messenger of the heart. Reflect how Allāh has actualized the aid He affords His servants through their hearing, their sight, their hands movements and the walking through His statement: "...his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks..." in a manner that shows that He is with His servant in aid and support and the servant can only carry such actions out through His aid and guidance through these senses of hearing and sight and the movement of his hands and feet.

Reflect over His statement and the usage of the [Arabic] letter *'ba'* (which indicates guidance and aid) preceding the noun as opposed to the letter *'lam'* (which indicates for my sake). Perhaps one may suspect that the *'lam'* is more befitting in this context as it is more indicative of the overall objective and the reality that such actions are done for the sake of Allāh and that it is more specific than the occurrence of such actions through His guidance and aid. However, this is a misconstrued understanding and an error in judgment, as the letter *'ba'* here does not only refer to 'assistance' as none of the actions of the righteous or the immoral can be completed without the ability granted to them by Allāh. Thus, the letter *'ba'* in this regard refers to the constant assistance and aid (not an accompaniment of immanentism or pantheism), i.e., the individual hears, sees, grasps and walks whilst I am his aid and supporter, as is the meaning in the other narration: "I am with My servant as long as he remembers Me and his lips move in My mention."[1] This is the exclusive accompaniment that has been mentioned in the statement of Allāh:

لَا تَحۡزَنۡ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَنَاۖ ﴿٤٠﴾

"Do not grieve, indeed Allāh is with us." [At-Tawbah:40], and the statement of the Prophet: "What do you think of two people whom Allāh is the third."[2] and in the statement of Allāh:

وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

"Indeed, Allāh is with the good-doers." [al-'Ankabut:69],

And His statement:

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَواْ وَّٱلَّذِينَ هُم مُّحۡسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

"Indeed, Allāh is with those who have piety and those who do good." [An-Nahl:128]

And His statement:

وَٱصۡبِرُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

"Be patient, indeed, Allāh is with the patient ones." [al-Anfal:46]

And His statement:

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurairah in the Book of Monotheism.

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in the Book of the Virtues of the *Muhajirun (Emigrants of the Companions of the Prophet)* [3653]. Also collected by Muslim in the Book of the Virtues of the Companions, Chapter: The Virtues of Abū Bakr [2381].

قَالَ كَلَّآ إِنَّ مَعِىَ رَبِّى سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾

"Nay, indeed, my Lord is with me, He shall guide me." [As-Shu'ara:62]

And His address to Prophets(s) Musa and Harun:

إِنَّنِى مَعَكُمَآ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾

"Indeed, I am with you, Hearing and Seeing." [Ta Ha:46]

It is evident through this that the meaning of the *'Ba'* in the narration better provided this meaning of accompaniment as opposed to the *'lam'.* Additionally, the true essence of sincerity, patience, reliance in Allāh and the correct level of servitude cannot be attained except through the meaning of this (letter) *'Ba'* and this level of accompaniment. Hence, whenever the servant is with Allāh, all difficulties dwindle, and the dreadful affairs become a comfort for the person. It is with Allāh's guidance and support that any difficulty can be simplified, any hardship becomes easy and any distant vision draws close. It is with Allāh's aid and guidance that all worries, anxieties and sorrow disappear.

There is not a worry whilst Allāh is with you, nor can there be any anxiety or sorrow unless he squanders the meaning that has been referred to through this letter *'Ba',* in which case, his heart becomes like a fish outside of water, gasping to breath and twisting and turning violently until it is placed back into the water. So when this correspondence between the servant and his Lord actualizes, the Lord further aids His servants in his needs and desires. He said: "If he asks Me, I shall certainly give him, and if he seeks refuge in Me, I shall surely grant him refuge." i.e., as he has complied to My commands by implementing My orders and seeking a nearness to Me through the actions that are beloved to Me; consequently, I shall afford him his aims and aspirations in whatever he asks of Me to do for him or seeks refuge in Me from. This force is so strong from both the Lord and His servant that it amounts to the Lord disliking the inevitable death of His servant because the servant himself dislikes death, and the Lord dislikes what the servant dislikes and dislikes to harm him. It is from this perspective that He does not like to remove his soul.

However, such a person's death is to their own advantage, because He has not caused his death except to grant him the true existence, He has not decreed his illness except to grant him full health, He has not afflicted him with poverty except to enrich him, He has not denied him of things except to give him other things, He did not expel him from Paradise whilst in the loins of his father except to re-admit them into it in the best manner and He did not say to the father of mankind 'Exit it' except that He wanted to re-admit him back into it. This is truly the beloved One, in fact, if every root of hair on a person carried the utmost love for Allāh, it would only amount to some of Allāh's right over His servant.

Transfer your heart wherever you will — true love is only to the first love

How many places on the earth does a person love — but he yearns for the
first place he ever was

Finally, there is the stage of *At-Tatayyum,* which is the final level of love, and it is when the one who loves subjugates themselves to their beloved. This term is used if the emotion of love has subjugated the person to their beloved one. It can also be said: *'taymu-Allāh' meaning 'the servant of Allāh'.* The true reality of 'worship' is to degrade and submit oneself to their beloved one. It can also be said: *'the path is mu'abad (servile)'* i.e., degraded by the pedestrians. Hence, the servant has been degraded and subjugated by his love for his beloved one. Therefore, the noblest position for a man and the highest platform he can hold is servitude to Allāh; no level is more noble. Allāh has mentioned the most noble creation and the most beloved to Him as being in servitude to Him in the most noble scenarios, such as in the case of inviting to Allāh, or the challenge set to his opposition in their attempt to disprove his prophethood or the instance of the night journey into the heavens.

He said:

وَأَنَّهُۥ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبۡدُ ٱللَّهِ يَدۡعُوهُ كَادُواْ يَكُونُونَ عَلَيۡهِ لِبَدٗا ١٩

"And that when the servant of Allāh stood up supplicating Him, they almost became around him a compacted mass." [al-Jinn:19]

And He said:

وَإِن كُنتُمۡ فِي رَيۡبٖ مِّمَّا نَزَّلۡنَا عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِنَا فَأۡتُواْ بِسُورَةٖ مِّن مِّثۡلِهِۦ ٢٣

"And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our servant, then produce a chapter the like thereof." [al-Baqarah:23]

And He also said:

سُبۡحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَسۡرَىٰ بِعَبۡدِهِۦ لَيۡلٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡمَسۡجِدِ ٱلۡحَرَامِ إِلَى ٱلۡمَسۡجِدِ ٱلۡأَقۡصَا ١

"Exalted is He who took His servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa." [al-Isra:1]

Also, in the narration outlining the major intercession on the Day of Resurrection, the other Prophets will say: "Go to Muhammad ﷺ, a servant whom Allāh has forgiven for what has preceded and was to come"[1] through which he attained this lofty position of intercession due to his complete servitude to Allāh and the complete forgiveness that Allāh afforded him.

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[1] Refer to al-Bukhārī in The Book of Monotheism [7410] and Muslim in The Book of Faith [193].

Allāh created His creatures for them to devote their worship to Him alone without any partners, which is the most complete expression of love alongside the most comprehensive level of degradation and subjugation. This is actually the true form of Islām and the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), whom none other than those who fool themselves are averse to. Allāh said:

وَمَن يَرْغَبُ عَن مِّلَّةِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ إِلَّا مَن سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُۥ ۚ وَلَقَدِ ٱصْطَفَيْنَـٰهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ
لَمِنَ ٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥٓ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ بَنِيهِ
وَيَعْقُوبُ يَـٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ
إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِى ۖ قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ إِلَـٰهَكَ وَإِلَـٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَـٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَـٰقَ إِلَـٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

"And who would be averse to the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham) except one who makes a fool of himself? And We had chosen him in this world, and indeed he, in the Hereafter will be among the righteous. And when his Lord said to him, 'Submit', he said, 'I have submitted [in Islām] to the Lord of creation'. And Ibrahim (Abraham) instructed his sons, 'O my sons, indeed Allāh has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except as Muslims.' Or were you witnesses when death approached Ya'qub (Jacob), when he said to his sons, 'What will you worship after I am gone?' They said, 'We will worship your Lord, the Lord of your forefathers, Ibrahim (Abraham) and Ismā'īl and Ishaq (Isaq), one Lord, and we are Muslims to Him.'" [al-Baqarah:130-133]

Hence, the gravest sin in the sight of Allāh is polytheism (shirk), and Allāh does not forgive the one who fails to repent from it. The origin of polytheism stems from the association in expressing a devotion of love, as Allāh said:

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ ﴿١٦٥﴾

"And among the people are those who take other than Allāh as equals - they love them as they should love Allāh. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh." [al-Baqarah:165]

Here, Allāh informs that there are people who associate partners with Him, taking other than Allāh as equal, loving them as they love Allāh. He also informs that those who believe in Him love Him more than the idolaters love their false deities.

It has also been explained that the meaning is that they possess more love for Allāh than the polytheists have for Allāh. Even if they happen to have some love for Allāh, when they shared a portion of this love with their false deities, their love for Allāh diminished. Yet the monotheists have more love than them as their love is exclusively devoted to Allāh. Equating between the Lord of creation and likening Him to these false deities stems from a love, as we have previously mentioned.

Since the objective that Allāh has set for us for His creation is to single Him alone in worship, He severely reprimanded the one who sets a protector or intercessor. In some instances, He mentions this singularly, and during other times He couples them. Allāh said:

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۖ مَا لَكُم مِّن
دُونِهِۦ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤﴾

"It is Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then He rose above the throne. You have not besides Him any protector or any intercessor, so will you not be reminded?" [As-Sajda:4]

He also said:

وَأَنذِرْ بِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَن يُحْشَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ لَيْسَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ وَلِىٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

"And warn by the Qur'ān those who fear that they will be gathered before their Lord – for them besides Him will be no protector and no intercessor – that they may become righteous." [al-Anʿām:51]

When He mentioned each one singularly, He said:

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ شُفَعَآءَ ۚ قُلْ أَوَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

"Or have they taken other than Allāh as intercessors? Say, 'Even though they do not possess power over anything, nor do they reason?'" [Az-Zumar:43]

If a servant allies with his Lord alone, He grants the intercession to him and enacts the alliance between Him and His believing servants; consequently, they become His righteous allies as opposed to those who take another creature as a protector besides Allāh. One type of individual is of one color, and the other is another color in totality. Just as the polytheistic intercession is one shade and the true and established monotheistic intercession that can only be attained through monotheism is another shade completely. This is a distinct point that separates the people of monotheism (tawhid) from the people of polytheism (shirk), and Allāh guides whomsoever He wills to the straight path.

The Love of Allāh Is from the Necessities of Servitude to Him

This means that true servitude and worship cannot be attained whilst partners are being set alongside Allāh in the worship, as opposed to loving something for the sake of Allāh, which is from the necessities of servitude and an essential requirement. Indeed, loving the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ –in fact, placing his love before one's own self, his parents and children– is an act that faith cannot be completed without, as his love is from the love towards Allāh and it is the love for Allāh's sake. al-Bukhārī and Muslim have both collected a narration on the authority of Anas bin Malik who narrates that the Prophet said: "There are three qualities whoever has them, will taste the sweetness of faith." and in another wording in al-Bukhārī: "None shall find the sweetness of faith unless they have these three characteristics... To love Allāh and His Messenger more than anyone else, to love a slave (of Allāh) only for the sake of Allāh and to abhor returning to unbelief after Allāh has saved him from it as he would abhor to be thrown into the Hellfire."[1]

As for the other narration: "Whoever loves for Allāh's sake, hates for Allāh's sake, gives for Allāh's sake and denies for Allāh's sake has completed their faith."[2]

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Faith, Chapter: The Sweetness of Faith [16] and in The Book of Manners [6041] and collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith, Chapter: The Traits of Those Who Find the Sweetness of Faith [43].

[2] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [4681].

In another narration: "Two men have never loved one another for the sake of Allāh except that the better one of them is the one who loves his companion more."[1]

All of this love is from the necessities and the indications of the love of Allāh, and the stronger it is, the stronger its foundation is.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in al-Adab al-Mufrad [544].

The Four Types of Love

The following are the four types of love that must be distinguished from one another, and those who have gone astray have only done so through a failure to differentiate between them.

One: The love devoted to Allāh. However, it is not sufficient alone to save an individual from His punishment or to attain His rewards. Indeed, even the pagans, the worshippers of the cross, the Jews and many others have some kind of love towards Allāh.

Second: The love of whatever Allāh loves. This is the one that enters an individual into Islām and releases him from unbelief, and the most beloved people to Allāh are those who are most fulfilling of this kind of love and the most adherent to it.

Third: The love for the sake of Allāh. This type is from the essentials of loving whatever He loves, and this kind cannot be truly realized unless an individual loves for His sake.

Fourth: Loving something alongside Allāh. This is the polytheistic form of love. Anyone who loves something (in worship) alongside Allāh has taken this object as a partner besides Allāh, and this is the love that emanated from the pagans.

There is a fifth type left to mention that is unrelated to our current discussion and that is natural love. It is to incline towards something or someone compatible to a person's character, such as the love that a thirsty person may have for drinking water, or the love a hungry person may have towards food or a love for sleep or a spouse or a person's own offspring. Such a kind is not dispraised unless it diverts the person from remembering Allāh or preoccupies an individual from loving Allāh, as He says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ

"You who believe, do not allow your wealth or your offspring to divert you from the remembrance of Allāh." [al-Munafiqun:9]

And He also says:

رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَـٰرَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ﴿٣٧﴾

"Men whom neither commerce or sale distracts them from the remembrance of Allāh." [An:Nur:37]

Al-Khulla – The Highest Form of Love

Then there is a type called *al-Khulla*. It consists of a complete love that has reached its pinnacle point in a manner by which there is no space in the heart for anyone other than their beloved one, and it is a station that cannot be shared in any form or fashion. This station has exclusively been afforded to two people –may they be mentioned in the highest gathering and the blessings of Allāh be bestowed upon them- they are the Messengers Muhammadﷺ and Ibrahim (Abraham), as the Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: "Allāh has taken me as a *khalīl*, as He has taken Ibrahim as a *khalīl*."[1] Also collected in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim, the Prophet states: "If I were to hold anyone from mankind as a *khalīl*, I would have taken Abū Bakr as my *khalīl*; however, your companion (referring to himself) is the *khalīl* of Allāh."[2] In another narration: "I free myself of the exclusive love of every *Khalil*."[3]

When Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) beseeched his Lord for a child, he was provided one and his heart became attached with the love of this child devoting a part of him to it. Allāh disliked that His *khalil* share a portion of this love to other than Him, so he commanded Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his own child, and this command was ordained through a dream Ibrahim had. Applying this command is of the most difficult calamities and trials to bear. However, the intent was not the sacrifice of the child; rather, it was the sacrifice of the child from this attachment to the heart so that the heart can be in sole devotion to the Lord. Thereafter, when Prophet Ibrahim hastened to fulfill this command and give preference to the love of Allāh over the love of his own child, the objective was achieved and thus the burden of slaughtering was uplifted. Instead, he was awarded a hefty sheep because Allāh does not ordain something and then remove it in totality without any trace, rather He allows some of its remnants to remain or exchanges it as He preserved the legality of slaughter for His sake, and the legitimacy of presenting an offering of charity to Him alone before beseeching Him, or as He maintained the command of establishing five daily prayers after removing the burden of fifty throughout the day whilst maintain the reward for fifty through the act of five. As He declared in a divine narration: "My Word does not change, they are five prayers, and will be recorded for you as fifty in the reward."[1]

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[1] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Mosques, Chapter: The Prohibition of Building Mosques on Gravesites [532].

[2] Collected by Muslim in The Book of the Virtues of the Companions, Chapter: The Virtues of Abū Bakr [2383].

[3] Previous reference

As for what is suspected by some of those who have erred in this matter that a standard emotion of love is more powerful than *khulla* and that Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) is the *khalil* (receiving the highest level of exclusive love) of Allāh whilst Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the beloved one to Allāh is all due to ignorance. The typical love is general and encompassing, whereas the *khullah* is specific and it is the pinnacle of love. The Prophet informed that Allāh has ordained him as a *khalil* and negated that he has a *khalil* besides his Lord whilst also declaring his love for his wife A'isha, her father, Umar bin al-Khattab and others. Additionally, Allāh loves the repentant ones, He loves those who purify themselves, He loves the patient ones, He loves the good doers, He loves the pious and He loves the just ones. However, His *khulla* is exclusively afforded to only two Prophets, and the repentant youth is a beloved one to Allāh. This erroneous suspicion mentioned earlier is a result of a lack of knowledge and understanding about Allāh and His Messenger.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Prayer [349] and by Muslim in The Book of Faith, Chapter: The Night Journey [163].

The Intellectual One Favors the Highest of Two Beloved Options and the Least Detrimental of the Harms

It has preceded that an individual never relinquishes something they love and desire unless it is for something else that they love and desire. However, they leave the thing that they have the least love for in place of something their love is stronger towards, just as he may implement something that he dislikes in order to attain something that he has a stronger love towards, or to rid oneself of a harm that he detests more than the dislike of the action he is implementing.

It has also been previously mentioned that the duty of the mind is to favor the more beloved action and the least detrimental, and we mentioned earlier that this is the perfection in strength of love and hate.

However, this cannot be truly realized without the presence of two matters: A strong comprehension, and the courage of the heart. As an absence of such characteristics and any opposing actions will arise as a result of a weakness in comprehension in that an individual fails to comprehend the appropriate status of the beloved or the disliked matters, or it may be due to a weakness and deficiency in the soul and an inability within the heart that prevents someone from realizing what is more beneficial for them despite knowing it is more beneficial. So if a person's comprehension is sound, his soul is strong and his heart delves to find sufficient courage to favor the highly beloved over the most detrimental, he should realize that he has been guided towards the means of happiness. There are some who are dominated by the force of desires more than the force of their intellect and faith; thus, the stronger force overpowers the weak. There are others who have a stronger command of faith and presence of mind than the force of their desires. Hence, since many of the sickly are protected through the doctor's practice from ailments that are of harm to them, yet the patient is prevented by their own soul and desire avoiding the illness favoring his desires over the sound intellect. The doctors call this condition 'a deficiency in character' and this is the condition of the majority of those who have been afflicted with a sick heart, as they prefer the things that increase their illness due to the intense level of desire they have for it.

The basis of all evil is due to a deficiency in understanding and a weakness and an inferiority in the soul. Whereas the basis of all good comes from distinction in understanding and a strength and courage that emanates from the soul. Therefore, love and intent are the source and basis for all actions, as hatred and dislike are a basis and source to abandon an action. Both of these forces in the heart are the basis for the happiness of a servant or his destruction. The presence of an action under one's own will can only come to pass through the presence of its reasons, such as love and intent. As for the absence of action, at times it is due to an absence of its requisites or its reasons, and at times it can be due to a preventative hatred or dislike. All of which is in connection with the commands and the prohibitions, and it is likewise connected to the reward or the punishment. Through this, the ambiguity pertaining to the act of withholding from something becomes clear as far as whether it is an action itself or not. After close scrutiny, we gather that this matter divides into two categories: If there is an abandonment of an action that happens without effort, then the abandonment here is not considered an action in itself. However, if it is a result of an action that prevents the action taking place i.e., the abandonment, then here it is an action in itself.

The Most Astute Are the Ones Who Value the Permanent Pleasure of the Hereafter Over the Diminishing Pleasures of the Worldly Life

Each of the actions of withholding from something or partaking in it through their own will is valued by a person due to the benefit and pleasure that is gained through it, or the relief from a pain that is felt. Hence, the proverb states: "He remedied his chest and remedied his heart."

This is an objective that the intellectual one and even the wild animal will consider, yet most people will horrendously err in it by pursuing a pleasure that shall result in great pain. Thus, he pains himself from the very place he thinks he will receive pleasure and treats his own heart with something that will draw the most severe illness. In fact, this is the condition of the one who restricts his vision to the luxuries of this life without considering the consequences, and the duty of the mind is to reflect on the consequences. The most mindful people are those who value the permanent pleasure and comfort of the afterlife over this soon to end diminishing life, whereas the most feebleminded members of the creation are those who trade an everlasting bliss, a permanently pleasant life and the greatest pleasure that does not contain any troubles or deficiency in any fashion for a bitter life filled with pain and hazards that is swiftly disappearing.

Some of the scholars have said: "I have thought about the things that the astute people strive in search for, and I have realized that all of their endeavors are in search of one objective, even if their methods in attaining it differ. I have realized that they all endeavor to repel any worry and anxiety from themselves. One may attempt to do so through food and drink, another through business transactions and profit, another through marriage, another through listening to music or enchanting sounds and someone else may attempt to do so through nonsensical idleness and play. So, I said to myself: This is the objective of the intellectuals, but all of these methods do not lead a person to it. Instead, perhaps the majority of them may lead to the opposite effect. I declare that I have not realized any path amongst these many paths that lead to this objective other than the devotion to Allāh and worshipping Him alone and preferring His pleasure over all else."

As for the one who treads this path, if they miss out on a portion of the worldly life, he will surely gain a portion of something lofty and sufficient. If the servant attains this, he has gained all that he needs, but if he loses out on it, he has lost out on everything he needs. Yet if he gains a portion of the worldly life alongside this, he would have attained the rest in the most pleasant way. There is nothing more beneficial for an individual than treading this path or any path more effective in leading to his sought-after pleasures, bliss and joy, and it is Allāh Who grants success.

Whatever Is Beloved Can Be Divided Into Two Categories

Something that is directly beloved and something that is beloved for other reasons. However, the object that is beloved for other reasons will inevitably return to the One Who is directly beloved. Anything other than Allāh is beloved for other reasons, and there is nothing that is directly beloved except Allāh, and anything else that is loved is done so secondary to the Lord, such as the love towards the Angels, His Prophets or His righteous allies. All of which are secondary to His love but are also requisites to His love as the love towards the beloved necessitates a love to whatever they love. This is a point that must be considered, as it is a distinguishing point between the beneficial type of secondary love and the type of love that is of no benefit and could be harmful.

Know that none is loved directly except the One Who is perfect in essence and Whose essence deserves a sole right to Worship and Who is the true Lord and Self-Sufficient in His essence. Anything besides Him is to be detested or disliked according to its rejection of love and its enmity. Therefore, whatever is more distant to what He loves is also proportionally more detested.

This is fair measure that can be used to gauge the adherence to the Lord or the opposition towards Him as well as one's allegiance or disassociation. If we see an individual who loves the things that the Lord dislikes and hates what the Lord loves, we can ascertain through this that there is enmity. On the other hand, if we see an individual who loves what the Lord loves, dislikes what He dislikes, whilst the more something is beloved to the Lord, the more it becomes more beloved to the individual and more valued and the more something is disliked by the Lord, the more the individual dislikes it and distances it from himself, we ascertain that he holds an allegiance to the Lord in accordance to this level of allegiance and love. So adhere to this principal as much as possible within your own scope and the scope of others, because allegiance is compliance to the judgment of Allāh in whatever He loves or hates, not merely through a flawed practice of abundant fasting or praying or empty gestures.

Additionally, something that is loved for a reason other than itself can also be divided into two categories:

One: Something that is a source of pleasure once attained for the person who expresses this love.

Second: Something that initially draws some pain, but the person withstands this pain because it leads to something that is beloved to them, such as consuming a bitter medicine.

Allāh said:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن
تُحِبُّوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٢١٦

"Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you, and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. Allāh knows, while you know not." [al-Baqarah:216]

Here, Allāh informs that fighting is disliked to them, yet it is better for them due to it resulting to the most beloved and beneficial thing to them.

The soul loves comfort, inactivity and luxury, but that is detrimental to it since it leads to squandering the beloved objective. Hence, the astute person does not look to the beloved objective of the worldly life to value it over all else or to the pains of the worldly life in an earnest desire for them, as all this can be a source of evil for the individual and could bring forth the most intense pain and concurrently lose out on the greatest pleasure. In fact, the thinkers of the worldly life bear the disliked hardships in it in exchange for the pleasure they shall experience at the end of each hardship, even if it is short-lived.

Such affairs are divided under four categories:

- A discomfort that leads to further discomfort
- A discomfort that leads to something beloved
- Something beloved that leads to something else beloved
- Something beloved that leads to a discomfort

The beloved object that leads to something else that is beloved combines a motivation from two perspectives, and the discomfort that leads to further discomfort also combines the motivation to abandon it from two perspectives.

However, there are two further categories that contain a resisting force for their motivation. They both make up the battleground for the trials and tests that are experienced. So the soul favors whatever is closest to it, which is the worldly life, whilst the intellect and faith both favor what is more beneficial and longer lasting, whilst the heart remains in the middle swaying to one side at times and the other side at other times. Here appears the trial. The motivation within the intellect and in a person's faith constantly calls out: "Hasten to success…in the morning, a man will be grateful for the ease but at the time of death, a man will be grateful for having had piety."[1] If the darkness [hardship] of love intensifies and the power of desire finds a firm footing, he says: "O soul, be patient."

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[1] This is a proverb that is used to highlight a person who withstands difficulties in order to attain a pleasure thereafter.

It is only an hour and then it ends — and all of this will disappear and cease

The Origin of All Religious Actions

Since love is the origin of all action, whether the action is truth or falsehood, then the origin of all religious action must be the love of Allāh and His Messenger, just as the origin of religious statements is the true belief in Allāh and His Messenger.

Any desire that denies the absolute love towards Allāh and His Messenger or attempts to compete with it or any doubt that obstructs total belief is contrary to the origin of faith or at least an aspect that weakens it. If this contrasting factor strengthens until it is in complete opposition to the basis of this love and belief, it becomes a form of major unbelief and polytheism. If it does not reach such a level, it becomes a stain on its perfection and will contribute to its weakness and estrangement in conviction. It veils the person, severs their endeavor and causes relapse.

True allegiance cannot be correct without enmity, as Allāh says about the leader of the monotheists that he said:

قَالَ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُمُ ٱلْأَقْدَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِّىٓ إِلَّا رَبَّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

"He said, 'Then do you see what you have been worshipping, you and your ancient forefathers, indeed, they are enemies to me – except the Lord of creation.'" [Ash-Shu'araa:75-77]

Therefore, the *Khalil* of Allāh never attained this level of love without actualizing this particular enmity, as there cannot be any allegiance without a disassociation to something else and there is no allegiance to Allāh without a disassociation to anything that is worshipped besides Him. Allāh said:

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِيٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِذْ قَالُواْ لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُاْ مِنكُمْ وَمِمَّا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ﴿٤﴾

"There has already been for you an excellent example in Abraham [Ibrahim] and those with him, when they said to their people, 'Indeed, we are disassociated from you and from whatever you worship other than Allāh.'" [al-Mumtahana:4]

Allāh also said:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِى بَرَاءٌ مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا الَّذِى فَطَرَنِى فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِينِ وَجَعَلَهَا
كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِى عَقِبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

"When Ibrahim [Abraham] said to his father and his people, 'Indeed, I am disassociated from that which you worship, except for He Who created me, and indeed He will guide me, and He made it a word remaining among his descendants that they might return to it.'" [Az-Zukhruf:26-28]

Thus, He has made this allegiance to Allāh and the disassociation from anything worshipped besides Allāh as a word that will remain among his descendants and a belief that the Prophets and their followers would inherit from each other. It is the statement of *'Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh'* [there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh]. It is the statement that was passed on by the leading monotheist to his followers until the Day of Resurrection. It is the statement that is the reason for the creation of the earth and the heavens and a natural disposition for every being. The religion is based on it, the direction of prayer was established in order to fulfill it and the swords of war were unsheathed in defense of it, and it is the pure right of Allāh over the entire creation. It is the statement that honors the wellbeing, property and family in this worldly life and the statement of salvation from the punishment of the grave and the punishment of the Fire. None can enter Paradise without it, and [it is] the only rope that can be used to reach Allāh. It is the statement of Islām and the key to the abode of Paradise. Due to it, the people are divided into two groups, one is wretched and the other is joyous, one has been accepted and the other is to be banished. Due to this statement, the lands of disbelief and the lands of faith are separate, and the blessed lands have been distinguished from the wretched and the lowly. It is the pillar that gives rise to the obligations and the *Sunnah* and "Whoever's last words from this life are '*Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh*' [there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh], enters Paradise."[1]

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[1] A narration collected by Abū Dāwūd [3116], al-Imām Aḥmad 5/233 [22034] and others.

The Core Essence of 'Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh' [There Is None Worthy of Worship Besides Allāh]

The essence and true meaning of this statement is to single the Lord - exalted is He in His Names and Actions without there being anyone worthy of worship besides Him – in love, exaltation, fear, hope and anything associated to this such as reliance, repentance, disposition and veneration. None should be loved in worship besides Him, and anyone other than Him that is loved is only done so secondarily to the love towards Allāh and that loving other than Allāh in this manner is a means to an increased love of Allāh. None should be feared in worship or placed hope in, or relied on, or have a disposition towards, or venerated, or sworn in the name of, or made an oath in the name of, or repented to, or absolutely obeyed, or seek a reward from or asked for aid in difficult situations, or seek refuge in, or prostrated to, or slaughter in the name of besides Allāh. All of which is combined in one statement, which is to refuse any form of worship to anyone other than Him, and this is the actualization of '*Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh*' [there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh.]

Hence, Allāh has forbidden the Hellfire from consuming anyone who truly testifies that there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh. It is an impossibility for anyone who truly actualizes the statement of '*Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh*' [there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh] and lives by it in uprightness to enter the Hellfire. Allāh says:

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِشَهَٰدَٰتِهِمۡ قَآئِمُونَ ٣٣

"And those who are in their testimonies upright." [al-Ma'arij:33]

Upright inwardly within the heart and outwardly. Undoubtedly, there are people whose testimony within their own selves is dead, and there are others that are in slumber, and if it is triggered it awakens and there are others that are reclining and there are others that are closer to being upright. This testimony is equivalently important to the heart as the soul is to the body, and a dead or sick soul is closer to its death, whereas a soul that is closer to a full life is better in establishing the benefits for the body.

The authentic narration states: "I know a word which no one says at the time of death except that their soul will find comfort and mercy."[1]

The life of the soul can only survive through the existence of this statement within it, just as the body can only contain life in it through the presence of the soul. Also, the one who dies in belief of this statement shall enter Paradise and reside therein, and whoever actualizes it throughout their life shall have their soul dwell in Paradise as a final refuge and shall live the most pleasant of lives, as Allāh said:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ ۝٤٠ فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ۝٤١

"But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination, then indeed, Paradise will be his abode." [An-Nazi'at:40-41]

So Paradise is his final destination of refuge on the day he shall meet Allāh, whereas the paradise of knowing Him, loving Him, finding comfort in remembering Him, yearning to meet Him, the joy and pleasure in being His servant is all the refuge he experiences in this life. Therefore, whoever has this as a paradise in this life, shall consequently receive the eternal Paradise on the day of final return. But whoever has been denied this paradise in this life, consequently, he is more undeserving of the Paradise in the Hereafter. The righteous are in bliss even if they live through difficulties and this life becomes constricted for them, and the immoral ones are in torment even if this life has been made luxurious and comfortable for them. Allāh said:

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[1] Collected by Ibn Mājah [3795].

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ﴿٩٧﴾

"Whoever does good, whether male or female and is a believer, then We shall grant them a pleasant life." [An-Nahl:97]

And the pleasantry of life is the paradise of this world. Allāh also says:

فَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَهْدِيَهُۥ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ ۖ وَمَن يُرِدْ أَن يُضِلَّهُۥ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُۥ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا
كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۚ ﴿١٢٥﴾

"Whoever Allāh wants to guide, He expand his chest to embrace Islām, and whoever He wants to misguide, He makes his chest tight and constricted as though he were ascending into the sky." [al-Anʿām:125]

Which blessing is greater than the expansion of the chest? And which torment is worse than the constriction of the chest? Allāh said:

أَلَآ إِنَّ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ لَهُمُ
ٱلْبُشْرَىٰ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٤﴾

"Undoubtedly, for the allies of Allāh there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve, those who believed and were fearing Allāh, for them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the Words of Allāh, that is the great victory." [Yunus:62-64]

So the sincere believer lives the most pleasant life, has the most relaxed mind frame, the most expanded chest and the most joyful heart. This is the paradise of the worldly life afforded before the one in the afterlife. The Prophet said: "If you pass by the gardens of paradise, sit in them." The Companions asked: "What are the gardens of Paradise?" He replied: "The gatherings of knowledge [remembrance]."[1] He also said in this regard: "Between my home and pulpit is a garden from the gardens of Paradise."[2] Likewise, when the Prophet was asked about his *wisal* [an extended and continuous type of fasting especially for the Prophet], he responded: "I am not like you. I spend the night while my Lord provides me with food and drink."[3] Here, he informs that whatever provisions he gains whilst in this state are equivalent to tangible food and drink, and that it is something exclusive to him. If he withholds from food and drink, he is compensated with something to replace it and suffice, as has been said:

She had some memories that preoccupy her — from drink and distract her from food

She gets a light from your face that she gains light from — and a direction and guidance from your speech

If she complains from the hardship of life, she evokes — the feeling when you met and relives the meeting

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[1] Collected by At-Tirmidhī [3510]. Also collected by al-Imām Aḥmad 3/150 [12545].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of the Virtue of Praying in the Two Mosques of Makkah and Madinah, Chapter: The Virtue of the Position Between the Grave and the Pulpit [1195]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of Hajj, Chapter: Between the Grave and the Pulpit [1390,1391].

[3] Collected by al-Bukhārī [1964] and Muslim [1105].

Nothing Is More Beneficial for a Person Than Devotion to Allāh

The more the presence of a particular thing is more beneficial for an individual and he is in need of it more, the more intense his pain will be if he misses out on it. And the more beneficial its absence is, the more the pain is felt by its presence. There is nothing more beneficial for an individual than devoting oneself to Allāh, occupying oneself with His remembrance, being blessed with His love and favoring His pleasure. In fact, there is not a life worth living, or a favor worth having, or happiness worth feeling or a joy worth experiencing without it. The absence of it is the most painful feeling and the harshest torment for the individual. Yet the soul is superficially concealed from this pain by being occupied by something else and being engrossed in another matter. So it is masked from its reality of its true state of pain and loss through missing out on the most beloved and beneficial thing to it. This is equivalent to the state of the drunkard who is sinking in his alcoholism, such as the one who has had his home burnt to the ground and lost his possessions and family but does not feel this pain of loss and sorrow due to his deep intoxication until the inebriation is lifted and he awakens from the unconsciousness, at which point he will realize his condition. The situation is the same whether the inebriation is removed and the Hereafter is in sight and you are on the verge of departing from this life onto the meeting with Allāh; rather, the sorrow and torment at such a moment is many times more painful. As the one who has been afflicted with a calamity connected to this life hopes that the affliction is replaced and knows that whatever he has been afflicted with is something that will disappear and not remain.

How then will it be if one is afflicted with a calamity that holds no compensation, no replacement and is incomparable to the worldly life? If Allāh decreed death to this individual to end this sorrow and pain, it would have been more befitting for that individual, and death would be the largest wish and the deepest sorrow. This would be the case if the pain were only as a result of losing out, let alone the torment that shall be inflicted on the soul and the body through other tangible means that cannot be repelled. Exalted be He, the One who assigned this weak creation the two significant burdens that not even the sturdy mountains could bear.

Now, present to yourself the most beloved thing to you in this life whereby if it were taken away from you, you would not feel any pleasure in this life. Then imagine it was taken away from you and a barrier was placed between both of you in your most needy moment, how would you feel? Imagine this feeling even though this beloved thing can be replaced, so reflect over the thing that can never be replaced.

Anything, if you lose it, it can be replaced — but there isn't a replacement for
Allāh if you lose [a connection with] Him

The divine narration states: "Son of Adam, I created you to worship Me alone, so do not play. I am responsible for your provisions so do not tire. Son of Adam, invoke Me, you shall find Me, and when you find Me, you will find all that you need. But if you do not find Me, you have missed out on everything whilst I am more beloved to you than anything else."[1]

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[1] It has been collected amongst the narrations of the children of Isrā'īl as mentioned by Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah in al-Fatawa [8/52].

The Origin of All Happiness Is the Love of Allāh and the Love of Whatever He Loves

Love is a generic term that encompasses a range of varying types of love in its amount and description. Since the case is as such, most of what is mentioned about it pertaining to Allāh is His exclusive right and that which befits His Majesty and is unbefitting for anyone other than Him such as the love of worship, repentance and the like. Indeed, it is unlawful to devote either of the two acts to anyone other than Allāh.

Love can also be mentioned using its unrestricted and general term, such as in the statement of Allāh:

دِينِهِۦ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِى ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ ﴿٥٤﴾

"Allāh will bring forth a people whom He loves, and they love Him." [al-Mā'idah:54]

And His statement:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ

"From the people are those who take other than Allāh as partners, they love them as they love Allāh, but those who believe love Allāh more." [al-Baqarah:165]

The greatest form of the dispraised form of love is to associate someone in this love alongside Allāh whereby the individual equates the beloved one he has associated with Allāh with the love of Allāh. On the other side of the spectrum, the greatest form of praised love is to devote the love of worship to Allāh alone and the love of what He loves. This love is the basis of all joy that none can be saved from the punishment except by way of it. Whereas the dispraised polytheistic love is the basis of all wretchedness which will lead those who perpetrate it into the torment. The people who ascribe to the praiseworthy true love are those who love Allāh, worship Him alone without associating any partners with Him, they shall not abide in the Hellfire, and whoever enters it from them shall not remain therein forever.

The Qur'ān often orders with this type of love and its requisites, as well as forbidding the unlawful form of love and its requisites. It also strikes similitudes and analogies for both types, narrates stories about both types alongside details of the actions for both, those who undertake them and those who are worshipped through them. It also mentions information about the actions of both types and the status in all three abodes: the life of this world, the life in the grave and the eternal abode in the Hereafter. The Qur'ān mentions both types.

The basis of the message that every Prophet conveyed, from the first of them to the seal of the Prophets was to worship Allāh alone without associating partners in worship with Him. This is a worship that necessitates a full devotion of love to Him and a full sense of submission and abasement towards Him whilst venerating and glorifying Him and all that this entails from obedience and piety.

It has been authentically reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim on the authority of Anas who narrates that the Prophet said: "By the One whose Hand my soul is in, none of you shall truly believe until I become more beloved to them than their child, parent and all of the people."[1]

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Faith [15] and collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith [44].

Additionally, al-Bukhārī[1] collected a narration in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that Umar bin al-Khattab –Allāh be pleased with him- said: "Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, you are surely more beloved to me than everything except myself." The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to him: "No Umar, until I am more beloved to you than your own self." Umar then responded: "By the One Who sent you with the truth, you are more beloved to me than my own self." The Prophet then said: "Now, O' Umar."

If this is how His servant and Messenger should be loved and placed before the love of one's own self, their children, their parents and all the people, what do you suspect the case would be pertaining to the One Who sent him and where the love devoted to Him should be placed?

The love of the Lord the Most High is especially different from any love towards anyone else in its quantity, description and exclusivity to Him alone. The obligation is that this love from the servant towards the Lord exceeds the love of his child and parents and even his own hearing, sight and soul that is within him. Thus, the true deity, the One he worships in truth becomes more beloved to him than all of this.

Some things may be beloved from a particular perspective as opposed to others and it could also be love due to a secondary outcome. However, none other than Allāh is loved unconditionally from every perspective and worship cannot be true unless it is directed to Him alone, Allāh says:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ ٢٢

"Had there been within the heavens and the earth gods besides Allāh, they would both have been ruined." [al-Anbiya':22]

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[1] Collected in The Book of Faith and Oaths [6632].

This deification and worship consists of complete love, obedience and submission.

Any Movement Is Motivated by Love

Any movement within the creation of the heavens or on the earth originates from a type of love. Love is the reason for it being in effect and the objective behind it. This is because the movements are of three types: movement of choice and want, a natural movement and a forced movement.

The natural form is original a form of stillness and the body will make a movement once it leaves its natural position; therefore, it moves in order to regain its natural state of stillness. It only makes this movement due to the force that compels it to do so, alongside the natural movement it makes in seeking a return back to its original state of stillness. So both types of movement are a result of the compelling force; thus, it is the basis of both types of movement.

As for the movement of choice and want, it is also a basis for the other two types as it complies with the wants and the love of an individual. Thus, all three types of movements comply with a person's love and wants.

The proof for this restriction into three categories is that if the one who is moving sense a feeling that urges them to make a move, then it is due to a want to do so, but if they do not sense an urge to move, then it either falls under the natural form or does not. The first of which is natural and the second is compelling.

Once this has been established, it is evident to see that whatever is in the heavens and the earth and anything in between them of the movement of the celestial figures, the sun, the moon, the stars, the wind, the clouds, the rain, the plants and the unborn fetus in the womb all move through the Angels who act as intermediaries that direct and apportion each matter as the text of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* indicate in numerous places.

The Belief in the Angels

Belief in the above is part of the complete belief in the Angels. Indeed, Allāh has assigned Angels for the womb, Angels for the raindrops, Angels for the plants, the wind, the celestial figures and for the sun, the moon and the stars.

He has also assigned four Angels to every human being, one on each side to write the deeds and one in front of the person and one behind him for protection. He has assigned Angels that collect the souls at the time of death and prepare them for their abode in Paradise or the Hellfire. There are also Angels that descend to ask and test an individual in their grave to either execute the torment or present the blessings, there are also other Angels that lead the people to the plain of ground that the people shall stand on after Resurrection and Angels that will inflict the torment on the people in the Hellfire or accommodate for the blessings in Paradise. He assigned Angels to the mountains, and Angels to deliver the clouds to wherever they have been commanded to be, He assigned Angels to dispatch the rain by the decree and command of Allāh as He wills. He assigned Angels to plant the fruits of Paradise, work therein and maintain it and for the Hellfire the same.

Thus, the mightiest troops who work for Allāh are the Angels, and the Arabic noun that means Angel '*Malak*' gives the perception that they are messengers that enforced to complete tasks for other than themselves which they do not have a say in, instead, the command is entirely from Allāh and they merely direct and apportion the command of Allāh and the actions He has permitted.

Allāh says about them:

وَمَا نَتَنَزَّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ ۖ لَهُۥ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَمَا خَلْفَنَا وَمَا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴿٦٤﴾

“[Jibrīl said] ‘We do descend not except by the order of your Lord, to Him belongs that before us and that behind us and what is in between, and never is your Lord forgetful.’” [Maryam:64]

Allāh also says:

۞ وَكَم مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ لَا تُغْنِى شَفَٰعَتُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَن يَأْذَنَ ٱللَّهُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَرْضَىٰٓ ﴿٢٦﴾

“And how many Angels there are in the heavens whose intercession will not avail at all except after Allāh has permitted it to whom He wills and approves of.” [An-Najm:26]

Allāh has also sworn by particular groups of the angels who accomplish His commands on the creation, as He said:

وَٱلصَّٰٓفَّٰتِ صَفًّا ﴿١﴾ فَٱلزَّٰجِرَٰتِ زَجْرًا ﴿٢﴾ فَٱلتَّٰلِيَٰتِ ذِكْرًا ﴿٣﴾

“By those Angels lined up in rows. And those who drive the clouds. And those who recite the message.” [As-Saffat:1-3]

and He said:

وَٱلْمُرْسَلَٰتِ عُرْفًا ﴿١﴾ فَٱلْعَٰصِفَٰتِ عَصْفًا ﴿٢﴾ وَٱلنَّٰشِرَٰتِ نَشْرًا ﴿٣﴾ فَٱلْفَٰرِقَٰتِ فَرْقًا ﴿٤﴾ فَٱلْمُلْقِيَٰتِ
ذِكْرًا ﴿٥﴾

“By those winds sent forth in gusts. And the winds that blow violently. And by the winds that spread clouds. And those Angels who bring criterion. And those Angels who deliver a message.” [al-Mursalat:1-5]

The Most High also says:

وَٱلنَّٰزِعَٰتِ غَرۡقٗا ١ وَٱلنَّٰشِطَٰتِ نَشۡطٗا ٢ وَٱلسَّٰبِحَٰتِ سَبۡحٗا ٣ فَٱلسَّٰبِقَٰتِ سَبۡقٗا ٤ فَٱلۡمُدَبِّرَٰتِ
أَمۡرٗا ٥

"By those Angels who extract with violence. And by those who remove with ease. And by those who glide. And those who race each other. And those who arrange each matter." [An-Nazi'at:1-5]

We have mentioned the meaning of the secret behind these oaths taken by Allāh in the book entitled '*Aymān al-Imān*'.

Once this is known, then it should also be known that these expressions, movements, wants and actions are all acts of worship by them towards the Lord of the heavens and the earth and the actions they have been compelled with are secondary. Had it not been for the feeling of love, the celestial bodies would not have moved, or the bright stars, nor would the winds blow, or the clouds have moved, nor would the unborn fetus have moved in the mothers womb, nor would any seed have emerged to produce any plant, nor would the waves flown, nor would the Angels have moved or would the heavens and the earth along with all the creation with them have praised their Creator. Exalted be He Who receives the praises the praises of the seven heavens and the earth and all that is within them, Allāh says:

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ٱلسَّبۡعُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّۚ وَإِن مِّن شَيۡءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمۡدِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن لَّا
تَفۡقَهُونَ تَسۡبِيحَهُمۡۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورٗا ٤٤

"And there is not a thing except that it exalts Allāh by His praise, but you do not understand their way of exalting. Indeed, He is ever Forbearing and Forgiving." [al-Isra:44]

Once this has been established, it will be known that every living being has a love for something and takes actions towards it. Everything that moves has an origin: love and an urge to do the action.

Any living being that exists cannot be upright unless their movement and love is devoted to their Creator alone, just as they would not exist unless He alone created them. It is in this regard that Allāh said:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

"Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allāh, they would both [the heavens and the earth] have been in ruin." [al-Anbiya:22]

He –exalted be He– did not say: 'they would become extinct' or 'they would both have not existed,' as He is able to maintain them despite a corruption within them, but they cannot remain in existence in this fashion in a correct and upright manner. This correctness and uprightness can only be achieved if Allāh is the only One worshipped by them and all that they contain. If two gods ruled the creation, the orderliness of the creation would have been corrupted to the highest degree, as each of the two gods would rival the other, attempt to overcome the other and single oneself from the other. Polytheism is a deficiency that negates the possibility of having a right to worship, and a true deity would not settle to have a deficiency. If one of them were to overpower the other, he would assume the right to worship and it would be clear that the defeated one would not be a god. However, if neither one is able to overcome the other, this would necessitate that both of them are incapable and have a deficiency and would not be a true deity. Thus, it is only right that there is One true deity above all that is worshipped in truth that is more powerful than all, ruling above all. Otherwise, each rival would attempt to claim a part of the creation and each would seek supremacy over the other. From that emerges the ruin of the heavens and the earth, as would be the case in the ruin of a country if it were ruled by two kings and the ruin of a wife if she had two husbands or a camel that lived amongst two stallions. Furthermore, the origin of corruption in this universe is due to the differing among tyrannical kings and rulers. Thus, the enemies of Islām would not dare to seek to ruin Islām in any era other than the eras wherein the Muslim rulers became numerous during their differences and conflict when each of them sought independence and supremacy of each other in their own lands.

The rectification of the heavens of the earth and the uprightness and order of the creation in such a perfect manner is from the most obvious proofs that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh alone without any partners, to Him alone belongs complete sovereignty and praise, He is able to do all things and that every other thing that is worshipped besides Him from the lofty heavens by the mighty throne to the depths of the earth is worshipped in falsehood. Allāh says:

مَا ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِن وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُۥ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍۚ إِذًا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَٰهِۭ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ
بَعْضٍۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

"Allāh has not taken any son, nor has there ever been with Him any deity, in which case each deity would have taken what it created, and some of them would have sought to overcome others. Exalted is Allāh above what they describe. He Knows the unseen and the witnessed, so high is He above what they associate." [al-Mu'minūn:91-92]

Allāh also said:

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ ءَالِهَةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنشِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ
رَبِّ ٱلْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

"Or have men taken for themselves gods from the earth who resurrect. Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allāh, they both [the heavens and the earth] would have been ruined. So exalted is Allāh, Lord of the throne, above what they describe. He is not questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned." [al-Anbiya:21-23]

Allāh also said:

قُل لَّوْ كَانَ مَعَهُۥٓ ءَالِهَةٌ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذًا لَّٱبْتَغَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ ذِى ٱلْعَرْشِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾

"Say: [O Muhammadﷺ] 'If there had been with Him other gods, as they say, then they would have sought a way to the Owner of the throne." [al-Isra:42]

It has been mentioned that the meaning to this verse is that they would have sought a way through rivaling one another and overcoming each other just as the kings do with one another.

This is evident through the other verse:

وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ﴿٩١﴾

"...and some of them would have sought to overcome others." [al-Mu'minūn:91]

Our Shaykh [Ibn Taymīyah] stated: "The correct meaning is that they would have sought a way to Him by acts of obedience and worship, so how can you worship them besides Allāh because if they were, as you say, deities besides Allāh, they would have been subservient to Him?"

He further stated: "This is evident from a number of angles: From them: The statement of Allāh:

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ ٱلْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُۥ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُۥٓ ﴿٥٧﴾

'Those whom they invoke seek means of access to their Lord, striving as to which is the nearest, and they hope for His Mercy and fear His punishment.' [al-Isra:57]

In meaning, it is as if He is saying that these beings that you worship besides Me are My servants just as you are My servants, they hope for My Mercy and fear My punishment. So why do you worship them besides Me?

Second angle: Allāh the Most exalted did not say: 'They would have sought a way to overcome Me.' Instead, He said: **'They would have sought a way to...'** This terminology is used in the context of drawing close to something, just as in the verse:

ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱبْتَغُوٓاْ إِلَيْهِ ٱلْوَسِيلَةَ ﴿٣٥﴾

'Fear Allāh and seek the means of nearness to Him.' [al-Mā'idah:35]

However, in the context of overcoming something, the wording differs such as in the verse:

فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُواْ عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٤﴾

'If they obey you, seek no means against them.' [An-Nisa:34]

Third angle: They did not say that their [false] deities try to defeat Him and seek supremacy over Him, Allāh said:

قُل لَّوْ كَانَ مَعَهُۥٓ ءَالِهَةٌ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

'Say: [O Muhammad ﷺ] 'If there had been with Him other gods, as they say…' [al-Isra:42] but they would say: Their deities seek a nearness to Him and that they draw them closer to Him. So the response was: Even if the affair was as you claim, they would still be servants to Him, so why do you worship His servants besides Him?"

This love in worship has effects, consequences, specific features and rulings whether it is praiseworthy or dispraised, beneficial or harmful or whether it is tactful or contains sweetness or whether it is something longed for, something a person finds comfort in or draws an individual closer to their loved one or disconnects them from them or whether it contains an obstruction or an abandonment, joy and happiness, tears and sorrow or otherwise from the rules and features pertaining to this emotion.

The praised form of love is the one that benefits and produces a benefit for the person in their worldly and afterlife. This form of love is the banner under which happiness is found, whereas the unbeneficial one produces harm for the person in their worldly and afterlife, and it is the banner under which wretchedness is found. It is well established that the astute person will not choose the love of something that harms him and assigns him to misery. This type of outcome only emanates from ignorance and injustice since the soul could crave something that harms it and does not benefit it, but that is oppression from the person on their own self either due to their own ignorance about the status of their beloved one because they desire and love something without knowing the harms that are contained in loving it. This is the condition of those who follow their desires without knowledge. Or in the other case, they may know about the harms in loving this particular thing, but they favor their desires over whatever they know. In this case, the love towards this object may be constructed from two things - a corrupt creed and a dispraised desire. This is the condition of those who follow their suspicions and what their souls crave. The corrupted love only emanates from ignorance and an incorrect belief, an overwhelming desire or something connected to that that supports it allowing the doubt to resemble the truth, beautifying the beloved object alongside a desire that invites to it. Both the force of the doubts and that of the desires work together against the force of the intellect and faith, and the victorious one is the stronger of the two. Once this is known, it is gathered that every type of love carries the ruling of whatever it loves. So the beneficial and praiseworthy type of love that is the source of a person's happiness carries consequences that are all beneficial to the person, and they carry the same ruling. Hence, if the individual cries it benefits him, if he feels sorrow it benefits him, if he feels happy it benefits him, if he feels miserable it benefits him and if he is pleased it also benefits him. Therefore, he lives amongst the various levels of love and its consequences whilst receiving a constant increase of advantage and strength.

As for the harmful and dispraised type of love, its consequences and effects are all harmful to the individual and distancing from his Lord. As much as he wishes to live in the midst of its effects and be involved in its various degrees, he is at a loss and a distance. This is the case with any action that is born out of obedience or sin respectively. Anything that is produced from obedience is an advantage and a nearness to Allāh for the one who performs the action, but anything that is produced from disobedience is a loss and further distance for the perpetrator of the action. Allāh said:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَلَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا مَخْمَصَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَطَـُٔونَ مَوْطِئًا يَغِيظُ
ٱلْكُفَّارَ وَلَا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ عَدُوٍّ نَّيْلًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُم بِهِۦ عَمَلٌ صَٰلِحٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً وَلَا يَقْطَعُونَ وَادِيًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

"That is because they are not afflicted with thirst or fatigue or hunger in the cause of Allāh, nor do they tread on any ground that enrages the disbelievers, nor do they inflict upon any enemy any infliction but it is registered for them as a righteous deed. Indeed, Allāh does not allow to be lost the reward of the doers of good. Nor do they spend an expenditure, small or large, or cross a valley except that it is registered for them that Allāh may reward them for the best of what they were doing." [At-Tawbah:120-121]

Allāh informs us in the first of the two aforementioned verses that the outcome of their obedience and actions is registered as righteous deeds. He then informs us in the second verse that the righteous actions that they directly fulfilled are themselves recorded for them as righteous deeds. The difference between the two is that the first is not from their own actions; rather, they are an outcome of their actions and so it is written for them as righteous deeds. Whereas the second one is their direct actions, so it is also written for them as righteous deeds. The victim of love should sincerely contemplate over this segment of the answer to know its advantages and disadvantages:

They shall know on the Day of Judgment what they have — wasted, and on
the scales they shall know what they reaped.

Love and Free Will Are the Origin of Any Belief

Just as the emotion of love and the feeling of free will are the original motivators for every action, as previously mentioned, they are also both the origin for every belief, whether it is true or false. Indeed, belief is from the inward and outward actions, whilst love and free will are the foundation of it all.

Religion is comprised of obedience, custom and moral character. Hence, it is the inseparable and constant obedience that becomes intrinsic with moral character and customs, and this is why moral character has been used to refer to religion in the statement of Allāh:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ④

"Indeed, you are of great moral character." [al-Qalam:4]

Al-Imām Aḥmad narrates from Ibn 'Uyaynah who said that Ibn Abbas said regarding the exegesis of the verse: "Indeed, you are upon a mighty religion." A'isha –Allāh be pleased with her– was asked about the moral character of the Prophet to which she replied: "His moral character was the Qur'ān."[1] Within the meaning of religion is submissiveness and subjugation and the meaning of humbleness, compliance and obedience. Therefore, the superior requests the action from the inferior, as it has been said: I overpowered him, so he became submissive.

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[1] Collected by Muslim [746].

The action itself comes from the inferior one and is offered to the superior. It can be said: "I believed and obeyed Allāh," or "so and so does not obey Allāh," or "so and so does not obey Allāh at all," (the verb used in these terms is *dān*). It means "to obey Allāh, love Him and fear Him." The internal *dīn* (religion) here must include love and submission just like the rest of the acts of worship, as opposed to the apparent acts of obedience, they do not necessitate a portrayal of open love for it even though it may contain submission and humbleness.

Allāh named the Day of Resurrection *'yawm ad-dīn'* because it is the day the people will profess (*yadīnu*) their actions, if they were good they shall receive a good reward, and if they were evil they shall receive an evil recompense. This includes their recompense (*jaza'*) and their judgment (*hisab*), and that is why is has also been called 'the day of *hisab*' and 'the day of judgment.'

Allāh says:

فَلَوْلَآ إِن كُنتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِينِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ تَرْجِعُونَهَآ ﴿٨٧﴾

"Then why do you not, if you are not to be recompensed, bring it back." [al-Waqi'ah:86-87] i.e., return the soul to its place, if it is as you claim that you are not under One Lord, nor are you subdued or be held to account. Nonetheless, this verse requires an explanation. It was mentioned to defeat their argument of rejection of the Resurrection and the Final Judgment. It must be noted that the evidence must refer to the subject matter that is being proven in a manner whereby the thought process shifts towards the proven mater due to the correlation between the proof and the proven. Anyone who has been obliged with something is a proof for the obligation, and the opposite is not necessarily true.

If someone rejects the Resurrection and the Final Judgment, they have disbelieved in Allāh and denied His perfect ability, Lordship and Wisdom. So they either accept that they have a Lord that is all powerful over them Who chooses to do as He wills with them, He causes them to die if He wills, gives them life if He wills, commands them and prohibits them, rewards the good doers and punishes the evil doers, or they fail to accept the Lord Whose status is as mentioned. If they believe in Him, they shall consequently believe in the Resurrection and the recompense. However, if they deny it and disbelieve, then this is their claim that they are not subjects to a Lord nor are they ruled by One, nor do they have a Lord that decides their affairs as He wills. So why is it that they are unable to repel death when it comes to them or return a soul to its place once it reaches the exit point of the throat? This is actually an address to those who are present at the time of someone's death as they suffer through the person's death. Why can't you return his soul to its place if you have this ability and free-choice as you claim, why is this the case since you claim not to be subjected to the rule of a Lord not are you overpowered by One Who has perfect Might and Ability who passes His judgments on you as He wills and executes His commands on you?

This exhausts their arguments excellently as their inability to return a single soul from one place to another becomes evidently clear, even if they combined the help of every human being and *jinn*!

What an amazing and pertinent verse it is that proves the His Lordship, Oneness, absolute control over His servants and the accomplishment and passing of His judgments on them!

The religion is of two portions: The portion of the legislation and the commands and the portion of the judgment and recompense. Both are under the absolute sovereignty of Allāh, as the religion belongs to Allāh alone whether it is His command or His judgment, and the worship of love is the basis of both portions. Indeed, whatever Allāh has legislated and commanded with is beloved to Him, and whatever He has prohibited is disliked and hated to Him due to its opposition to what He loves and is pleased with. The obedience of an individual is accepted if it is based on a love and pleasure for it, as the Prophet said: "He has tasted the sweetness of faith. The one who is pleased with Allāh as the Lord, Islām as their religion and Muhammad ﷺ as his Prophet." This is based on love and it is the reason for its legislation. Likewise, the portion of the religion that is recompense. Is consists of rewarding the good doer for their good and recompensing the evildoer for their evil. Both aspects are beloved to Allāh because they are from His perfect Justice and Virtue and both are from His perfect Attributes, and He loves His Names and Attributes and loves those who love them. Both portions are within His straight path that He is on, He is on a straight and correct path in His commands, prohibitions, rewards and punishments, as He mentioned when He informed of the address His Prophet Hūd made to his people:

إِنِّيٓ أُشْهِدُ ٱللَّهَ وَٱشْهَدُوٓاْ أَنِّي بَرِيٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ مِن دُونِهِۦۖ فَكِيدُونِي جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿٥٥﴾
إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمۚ مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ ءَاخِذُۢ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٦﴾

"Indeed, I call Allāh to witness, and witness yourselves that I am free from what you associate with Allāh other than Him, so plot against me all together and do not give me respite. Indeed, I have relied upon Allāh, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature but that He holds its forelock, indeed my Lord is on a path that is straight." [Hud:54-56]

When the Prophet of Allāh knew that his Lord is on a straight path in his creation and command, reward and punishment, decree, depriving and giving, giving wellbeing or decreeing calamities, guidance and misguidance, that is all within the scope of His Perfect Majesty that befits

His Names and Attributes such as justice, wisdom, mercy, benevolence, virtue, affording the reward and punishment in their rightful place, affording guidance and misguidance to those who deserve it all in their most suitable place in a manner that deserves complete praise and gratitude for that provided him with the necessary knowledge, he called out in front of the masses with firm resolve and a heart that had no fear and was devoted solely to Allāh:

إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمۚ مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ ءَاخِذُۢ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ
مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ٥٦

"Indeed, I call Allāh to witness, and witness yourselves that I am free from what you associate with Allāh other than Him, so plot against me all together and do not give me respite. Indeed, I have relied upon Allāh, my Lord and your Lord." [Hud:56]

Then he informed them of His Might and Power over the entire creation and their subjugation to Him, he said:

"There is no creature but that He holds its forelock," so how can I fear something whose forelock is in the possession of someone else within His grasp and under His authority; that would be nothing more than the highest level of ignorance and the worst form of oppression. Then he informed that Allāh is on a straight path in all of what He declares and decrees, so a servant should not fear that He will ever oppress him, and a person should not fear anyone whose forelock is within His grasp because He is on a straight and correct path. His judgment shall come to pass upon His servants, just is His decree. He has complete reign over everything and deserves full praise. His decree over His servants is always just and generous: If He provides, honors, guides and grants success to an individual, it is from His virtue and mercy; and if He withholds, degrades or misguides, it is from His perfect justice and wisdom. He is on a straight path in both instances.

The authentic narration mentions: "Nobody has been struck with worry and sorrow and then says: 'O Allāh I am Your servant, the son of Your servant, my forelock in in You Hand, Your Judgment will come to pass on me, Your decree on me is just. I ask You by all the Names that You call Yourself, that You have taught to anyone from Your creation, that You have mentioned in Your Book, or that You have kept unknown in the realm of the unseen. Let the Qur'ān be the joy of my heart, the light of my chest, the remover of my sadness and the eradicator of my worries,' except that Allāh shall remove their worry and sorrow and exchange it for happiness."[1] This encompasses the Lord's universal and legislative rulings as well as the decreed occurrences that are under the servants will or those that he has been compelled with, as both shall come to pass on the servant and both are and fair. This narration has been extracted from the aforementioned verse and are both closely correlated.

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[1] 1/391 [3712]

Forbidden Images

We shall conclude the answer to the initial question with a segment that is connected to the infatuation of images and what that contains from ills in this life and the Hereafter, even though they may be too many to mention. An infatuation with images corrupts the heart, and if the heart is corrupted, consequently, the intentions, statements and actions also become corrupt and the core essence of monotheism of an individual also falls into ruin, as we have previously mentioned and as we shall further elaborate on shortly *inshā Allāh* (Allāh willing). Allāh informed about this condition primarily in two segments of society, they are the women and the sodomites. He informed us about the infatuation that the wife of al-Aziz had towards Prophet Yusuf and how she attempted to seduce him and use it against him. He also informed us of the condition of patience, chastity and piety that Prophet Yusuf remained resolute upon despite the fact that the affair he was trialed with was not one that a person would not remain patient in, except those whom Allāh grants sufficient patience to. Indeed, the action depends on the strength of the incentive and the presence or a lack of presence of a prevention. The incentive here was of utmost intensity, and this is from a number of perspectives:

One: The natural inclination that Allāh has created within a man towards a woman is similar to the one a thirsty person has towards water and the hungry one towards food. There are even occurrences wherein many people withhold from food and drink but are unable to withhold themselves from women. However, this is not something dispraised if it is done in a lawful manner, in fact, it may be complimented as has been narrated in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad on the authority of Yusuf bin 'Atiya As-Saffar, who narrates from Thabit, who narrates from Anas, who narrates that the Prophet said: "It has been made beloved to me, from this worldly life of yours, women and pleasant fragrance, I withhold from food and drink and I do not withhold from them."

Second: Prophet Yusuf was a youth, and the urge of a youth and vigor is stronger.

Third: He was an unmarried man. He did not have a wife or a concubine to subdue his urges.

Fourth: He was in a foreign land, whilst the foreigner in any land is more prone to fulfilling their desires than they are in their homeland being surrounded by their family and those known to them.

Fifth: The woman who desired him was someone of status and beauty to the extent that any of these two characteristics would be enough of a reason for the action to occur.

Sixth: She was not desisting or refusing. Indeed, many people's desire for a woman disappears if the woman herself is refusing or rejecting due to the humiliation that strikes him from a constant request to be with her. There are other people whose love and urge intensifies if the woman rejects the initial proposal, as the poet said:

I increased in love when she refused — the most beloved thing to a person is
when he is prevented

People's character differs, some people's love increases when the woman's desire for the man grows, and it pacifies if the woman is unwilling. I was also informed by some of the judges that their urge and desire pacifies when their wife or concubine is unwilling to the extent he becomes unwilling to be with her. There are also others whose love and urge increases when they are deterred, their desire intensifies whenever they are deterred and attains a pleasure similar to the pleasure felt when he attains hunted prey after it tried to flee and that there is a pleasure in lawfully attaining something after difficulty and a keen desire to obtain it.

Seventh: She sought, desired and seduced him and exerted her efforts. Through this, he was sufficed the burden of pursuing her and the submissiveness of desiring her. Rather, she was the one who pursued and was subservient, whilst he remained honorable and sought-after.

Eighth: He was in her home and under her control wherein he feared that she would harm him if he did not comply with her requests. Thus, the incentive of desire was combined with fear.

Ninth: There was no fear that she or anyone else from her entourage would expose what happened because it was she who was the one who pursued and desired the act after she had locked the doors and sent the guards and watchmen away.

Tenth: It appeared to onlookers that he was her slave in the home as he would enter the home and exit and be present in the home without objection from others. So there was a sense affability which preceded the seduction, this is one of the strongest incentives as was the case with a particular woman from the nobles of the Arabs. She was asked: What led you to commit fornication? She replied: "The closeness of the cushions and the lengthy period of intimate discourse." She meant: The closeness of the man's pillow to mine, and the long period of private conversation between us.

Eleventh: She used the aid of the leading plotters and conspirators. She showed him to them and complained of her condition to them so that she would use them to her advantage, so Prophet Yusuf sought the aid of Allāh against them, he said:

وَإِلَّا تَصۡرِفۡ عَنِّي كَيۡدَهُنَّ أَصۡبُ إِلَيۡهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

"If You do not avert from me their plan, I might incline towards them and be of the ignorant." [Yusuf:33]

Twelfth: She threatened with imprisonment and humiliation. This is a form of compulsion, as it is a threat from someone who it would be thought of that they are able to execute their threat. Thus, the incentive for desires and the incentive for freedom and safety became combined together in an effort to avoid the difficulty of imprisonment and humiliation.

Thirteenth: Her husband did not appear to show the jealousy or concern that was sufficient to separate between them and distance each one from the other. Rather, the furthest he went was to say to Prophet Yusuf **"Leave this off,"** and to his wife

وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرِي لِذَنۢبِكِۖ إِنَّكِ كُنتِ مِنَ ٱلۡخَاطِـِٔينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

"Seek forgiveness for your sin. Indeed, you were from the wrongdoers," [Yusuf:29] even though a strong sense of jealousy from a man is from the strongest preventatives in a situation such as this, but it was not apparent from him here.

Despite all of these enticements, he valued the pleasure and fear of Allāh over all else and was led by his love for Allāh to favor the imprisonment over fornication. He declared:

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱلسِّجۡنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدۡعُونَنِيٓ إِلَيۡهِۖ ﴿٣٣﴾

"My Lord, prison is more to my liking than that which they invite me to." [Yusuf:33]

He also knew that he would not be able to deflect this calamity from himself and that if His Lord did not save him and divert him from it, he would have inclined towards them in line with natural human character and he would have been from the ignorant ones. However, the decisions he made were from his excellent knowledge of his Lord and of himself.

This story contains morals, benefits and wisdoms that exceed one thousand benefits; perhaps, if Allāh grants us success, we shall assign a separate authorship for them.

The second category of people who have this form of infatuation are the sodomites, as Allāh said:

وَجَآءَ أَهْلُ ٱلْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ضَيْفِى فَلَا تَفْضَحُونِ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا
تُخْزُونِ ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِىٓ إِن كُنتُمْ فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ
لَفِى سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

"And the people of the city came rejoicing. [Lūṭ said] Indeed, these are my guests, so do not shame me. And fear Allāh and do not disgrace me. They said, have we not forbidden you from protecting people. [Lūṭ said] These are my daughters [women of the town] if you would be good doers [of lawful marriage]. By your life [Muhammadﷺ] indeed they were in their intoxication wandering blindly." [al-Hijr:67-72]

Allāh has recounted the stories of both parties and their infatuation of forbidden images and their lack of concern for the consequential harms. This infatuation is an illness that the doctors have failed to find a remedy for and have found its cure to be difficult. It is –by Allāh- a debilitating illness, a fatal poison that that proves difficult for the people to remove once it becomes attached to the heart, and its flame does not ignite in any heart except that it becomes difficult for the people to extinguish. It is of different categories.

At times it could reach a level of unbelief, such as in the case of someone who takes the one they are infatuated with as a partner besides Allāh, loving them as they love Allāh. What would the case be if they loved their beloved one to a higher level than their love for Allāh? This is a form of infatuation that is not forgiven [if the person dies in this state] as it is from the most severe forms of polytheism, and Allāh does not forgive that partners be associated with Him unless the person makes repentance during their lifetime.

The mark of this polytheistic infatuation is that the person who is affected will place the pleasure of their beloved one at a higher precedence than their Lord being pleased with them, and if both their duty they must perform towards their beloved one and the right of their Lord and obedience towards Him conflict, they place their duty towards their beloved one before the right of their Lord, value the pleasure of their beloved one over pleasing Allāh, and such a person will exert their most precious efforts for their beloved one before exerting any effort – if any- for their Lord. He does all he can to draw closer to the one he is infatuated with and only devote whatever is left of obedience towards his beloved one to his Lord, if any.

Reflect on the condition of most of those who are infatuated with images, are they as we have just mentioned? Then, place their situation on one side of the scale and their level of monotheism and faith on the other, then measure the two weights with a scale that can identify what pleases Allāh and His Messenger and corresponds to fairness and justice.

The case could even be that the infatuated one declares that they have reached a level of infatuation that exceeds their oneness of Allāh, as one wicked individual once said:

There are sips that I take with my mouth — they are sweeter than Tawḥīd (monotheism)

Also, as another wicked individual also said in a line of poetry, that the one he has become infatuated with has become more desirable to him than the Mercy of his Lord –we seek refuge in You, O' Allāh from this forsaking- he said:

Reaching you is more beloved to my heart — than the Mercy of the Exalted Creator

There is not the least doubt that this infatuation is from the most severe strands of polytheism.

Many of the infatuated ones declare that there is no room left in their hearts for anyone other than the one they are infatuated by at all. The one he has been trialed with could even have taken a hold of his entire heart making the infatuated one a fully subservient slave to the one he is infatuated by! Such a person has satisfied themselves with the servitude of a created being like him, in place of the honorable servitude to the Creator, The Exalted and Majestic. This is because servitude and worship are complete love and submissiveness, whereas this individual has exerted all his love, submissiveness and humility to the one he is infatuated with; thus, he has devoted the true essence of worship to the one he is infatuated by. Moreover, there is no correlation between this act and the immoral act [without this level of infatuation] as one is a major sin that necessitates particular rulings on the perpetrator, whereas the evil of this level of infatuation has reached the level of polytheism.

Some of the mystics say: To be trialed with the immoral deed and these images is better for me than to be trialed with an infatuation that my heart becomes servile to other than Allāh and preoccupied with other than Allāh.

The Detrimental Effects of this Infatuation and the Remedy for It

The remedy to this destructive illness is to firstly recognize the illness that one has been afflicted with that opposes monotheism, then the person should perform the inward and outward acts of worship that busy their heart from constantly thinking about the infatuation and habitually seek refuge in Allāh and beseech Him in order to divert this from himself and devote his heart to Him.

This predicament does not have a remedy more beneficial than having sincerity to Allāh. It is the remedy that Allāh mentioned in His Book in the statement:

كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَٱلْفَحْشَآءَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

"And thus, it was that We avert from him evil and immorality. Indeed, he was of our sincere servants."[1] [Yusuf:24]

Here, Allāh informs us that he is averting any infatuation and immorality from Prophet Yusuf due to his sincerity. Indeed, if the heart is purely devoted to Allāh and the individual's actions are sincerely for the sake of Allāh, the infatuation of images does not penetrate his heart because they only penetrate a blank heart, as the poet said:

It encountered a blank heart and settled therein

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[1] The vowel on the letter *lam* is a *kasra* as in the authentic recitation(s) ascribes to Ibn Kathir, Ibn 'Amr and Ibn 'Amir.

The astute one should know that any sound intellect and the legislation entail a pursuit of beneficial things and their further measures to better them along with a cessation to corruption and an effort to minimize it. Hence, if two options are presented to a person whereby one is beneficial and the other is detrimental, two things become incumbent upon him at this stage: Make a knowledge-based decision and take action. The knowledge-based decision is through seeking the best choice from the two options of benefit and detriment that have been presented. Once the correct choice becomes clear to an individual, it becomes incumbent upon him to adhere to it. However, it is common knowledge that there is no religious or worldly benefit in having an infatuation of images. In fact, the detriment far exceeds any possible benefit manifolds, this can be verified via a number of perspectives:

One: Being preoccupied with a love and mention of a created being from The Lord and remembering Him. Both of these feelings cannot find a place in the heart except that one of them will dominate the person and take full control and authority.

Second: The torment the heart goes through, because whoever loves something in this manner besides Allāh is inevitably tormented by it:

In the land there isn't anyone more tormented that a lover — even if his desires have a sweet taste

You see him weep in every incident — either from a fear of separation or a longing desire

He weeps if they are far, longing for them — and weeps if they are close, fearing their departure

His eyes are inflamed [with tears] during departure — and they inflame when they meet

So if a person allows the infatuation to torture them, it becomes from the harshest torments upon the heart.

Third: The infatuated one is a captive within the grasp of the one they are infatuated with, afflicted with degradation. But due to the intoxication of infatuation, he does not sense his affliction. Thus, his heart is like:

A bird in the hand of a child as he torments it — in the midst of disgrace,
whilst the child amuses himself and plays

Therefore, the life of the infatuated one is one of a chained captive, whereas the life of someone who has not been affected with infatuation is that of a captive who has been set free. The infatuated one is as the poet has mentioned:

Free when you see him, but he is imprisoned — ill as he circles on the verge
of destruction

Dead in the image of someone alive and walking — he will come to realize
the resurrection on the Day of Resurrection

Fourth: It busies a person from things that will benefit them in their worldly life and afterlife. There is nothing more wasteful to the benefits of the worldly life and afterlife than an infatuation to images. As for the religious benefits on an individual, they depend on the heart's focus and devotion to Allāh, but an infatuation to pictures is the strongest cause for the heart's lack of focus. As far as the worldly benefits are concerned, they follow on from the religious affairs. Thus, whoever has neglected their religious benefits and lost out on them, then their worldly benefits will be at a further and greater loss.

Fifth: The ills in the worldly life and the Hereafter seize a person who is infatuated with images faster than a fire consumes that is set on dry firewood. The reason for this is that the more a heart draws closer to an infatuation and grows in strength towards it, the further is distances itself from Allāh, and so the furthest heart from Allāh is the heart that is infatuated with images. And if the heart becomes distant from Allāh, it is infiltrated by ills from every angle, because the devil gains authority over it. Whoever is controlled and overpowered by their enemy, he shall not leave any evil or forsake any harm that he is able to strike you with except that he does so. So what do you think would be the case with a heart whose enemy, who is also the most vigilant creature who seeks its misguidance and destruction, has established himself and has distanced himself from his protector and the only one who can provide true happiness, joy and success?

Sixth: If it roots itself in the heart and strengthens its authority, the mind likewise becomes corrupt and gives rise to satanic whispers. The person may even be considered amongst the insane, whose minds have been spoiled to the extent they are unable to make use of them. News of such infatuated people is known through various mediums, rather some of it is has even been witnessed.

The most esteemed thing on a person is the mind. Through it, one can become distinguished from all animals. But if the mind becomes absent, the person begins to resemble the wild beast and may even be in a worst state than the animal. Was there anything other than an infatuation that took the mind of *majnūn Layla* (the one who was infatuated with Layla) and his likes?

It may even be so that his level of insanity surpasses the level of that of a mad person, as has been said:

They say I have gone mad because of the one I desire, so I said to them —
An infatuation is more than what the insane suffer from

From infatuation, the person does not awake for a long time — and the
insane one is only enraged for a moment

Seventh: It ruins the senses, either ethically or literally. As for the ethical ruin, it follows on from the destruction of the heart because the eye, ear and tongue will be in ruin if the heart is corrupt. Thus, such a person shall deem the bad that emanates from himself and the one he is infatuated by as good in correspondence to the narration in the *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad in a narration that is ascribed to the Prophet: "Your love for something may blind or deafen you."[1] It blinds the core of the heart from seeing the faults of the beloved one, so consequently the eye does not see them and the ear is deafened from hearing anything of reproach, so the hear is unable to hear.

The desire in something conceals its faults, so the one who desires something will not clearly see its faults until their desire in it ceases, at which point he will see the faults. The intensity of desire acts as a veil over the eye that prevents one from seeing something in its true form.

I desired you when my eye was behind a veil — but when I could see clearly,
I tore myself up in blame

Someone who is engrossed into something does not see its faults, and the one who never came across it will also not see its faults. The only one who recognizes the faults of something is someone who was engrossed in it and then abandoned it. Thus, the Companions who embraced Islām after they were once unbelievers are more virtuous than those who were born as Muslims (and all Companions are virtuous). Umar bin al-Khattab said: "The foundations of Islām will be undone piece by piece if there are people who are born into Islām who do not recognize the days of pre-Islamic ignorance."

As for the corruption that this illness causes the senses, it causes an illness to the body and withers it, perhaps leading it to full destruction, as it is known from the news of those whose doom came by way of severe infatuation.

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[1] 5/194 [21694], 6/450 [27548]. Also collected by Abū Dāwūd [5130] and al-Bukhārī in At-Tarīkh [2/107]

A young man whose body became alarmingly thin and slender was brought before Ibn Abbas whilst on the plain of *Arafat,* so he enquired: What is the matter with him? They responded: He suffers from infatuation. Thereafter, Ibn Abbas would seek refuge in Allāh from being afflicted with infatuation for periods of the day.

Eighth: Infatuation –as we have previously mentioned- is an excessive level of passion whereby the one who is infatuated with becomes the dominant figure in the heart of the one who is infatuated until they become the only thing they imagine, remember or think about without ever diminishing from his feelings or thoughts. At that point, the soul begins to exhaust its strength in serving them, this consequently disables the soul's strength which results in many ills on the body and the soul that become difficult or nearly impossible to find a remedy for. This also results in a change of personality, actions and objectives that all become deficient that a person is incapable of rectifying. It has been said:

Love in its early stages are just whispers — they come and lead him away

If the person delves into the whispers of desires — then come the major affairs he cannot handle

The initial stages of a passionate love may seem easy and sweet, the middle stage is worrying, preoccupying for the heart and a sickness whilst the conclusion is danger and death if it is not intervened by the guidance and protection of Allāh. Some have said:

Live free, infatuation in the beginning is hardship — its middle is sickness and its end is death

Someone else said:

He fueled the infatuation until he became infatuated — when it settled with him, he could not handle it

He saw some water and thought it was a wave — when he reached it he drowned

In addition, the sin is recorded against him, so he has victimized and wronged himself, so the Arabic proverb fits his description: "You cry out for help (whilst you are drowning on a boat) yet it was you who tied the rope and you who inflated the boat."

Infatuation Has Three Stages

The infatuated one goes through three stages: An initial stage, a middle stage and the end.

It is incumbent upon him in the initial stage to combat this infatuation as much as possible if a lawful relationship with the one they love is unlawful or impossible.

However, if he has passed this stage without success and his heart refuses to stop traversing towards their beloved one –which is the middle stage– then he should suppress it and not expose the one he is infatuated by to the people, thus combining between a form of polytheism and oppression of another person. This form of oppression is from the most severe forms and the most harmful upon the one who is victim to this infatuation and their family and possessions.

It causes the people to malign the victim and divides their opinion about the victim between those who believe the story and those who reject it, and most people will believe any story they are told in this instance based on the slightest ambiguity. So if it is spread that so and so did something with a particular person, it may be rejected by one and believed by nine hundred and ninety-nine!

Also, the news that the infatuated one discloses to the people on this topic will be received as sound knowledge. It may even be that if the victim lies and fabricates a story about themselves and narrates it to someone in agreement with the infatuated persons whims, they may believe them with unwavering conviction; rather, if they happen to be in the same place at the same time, people may become convinced that is was a premeditated and agreed meeting.

Yet their conviction in this matter is merely based on suspicion, imagination, ambiguities, delusions and false news, which to them seems as strong as their conviction in the tangible and real affairs. It is due to such measures that the accusers of the pure and chaste one, the beloved one to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ who was exonerated from above the seven heavens was falsely accused of immorality due to the ambiguity of her and Safwan bin al-Mu'atal following the initial group on their expedition.

Had Allāh not decreed her innocence, defended her honor and rendered her accusers claim futile, events may have been other than how they unfolded. The intent here is to highlight that if the infatuated one exposes their love for someone who they are not able to have a legitimate relationship with, it counts as an injustice, harm and transgression against the victim and their family and an opportunity for many people to affirm their suspicions about them.

Moreover, if someone who inclines to him - either willingly or out of fear - aids him, the oppression spreads and the intermediary individual becomes an oppressive individual who has no concern for the honor of a woman. If the Prophet has supplication for a curse upon the one who is an intermediary and is instrumental in the deal between a briber and the bribed in completing the transaction, how serious do you think the case would be with regards to the one who acts as an intermediary between the infatuated one and their beloved one in an unlawful relationship?!

Here, both the infatuated one and their accomplice aid one another in oppressing the one who is subject to this infatuation and the oppressing of others in their possessions and honor and family who may be obstacles in the path towards their objective. On many occasions, attaining the objective could depend on assassinating a soul that stands in the way of their aim. How numerous are the murder victims whose blood has been spilt for this reason, whether they are a spouse or a master or a relative!

And how many women have been beguiled and corrupted against their husbands, or servants against their masters! Bearing in mind that the Prophet cursed the one who perpetrates such an act, frees himself from them and declares it to be from the major and destructive sins.

Since the Prophet has forbidden us from as much as proposing to a woman for marriage whilst someone else is in a marriage proposal with her, or out haggling and undercutting his brother in a business transaction, what do you think the severity of exerting effort to separate a husband from his wife or a servant from their master would be?! Yet those who are infatuated with images along with their accomplices do not even see that as a sin.

If the infatuated one seeks to reach the one they are infatuated by and also has their own spouse, the matter becomes worse in that it now includes a form of injustice to others that is equal if not more than the sin of lewdness itself.

Simply repenting from such an immoral act does not return the right of a person to them or fulfill it. Even if the repentance fulfills the right of Allāh, the right of the oppressed one still remains unattended to, and the oppressed shall have a right to seek their rights from those who oppressed them on the Day of Resurrection. The oppression towards a parent is to corrupt their child and those who are more dear to them than their own selves, and the oppression towards a husband is to corrupt their wife, and the offence with the one they share a bed with is worse than oppressing them by taking all their wealth. This is more harmful to him than stealing all of his wealth. How atrocious is it as a sin that is more severe than the immoral deed itself.

It is from the rights of the one who leaves on an expedition for the sake of Allāh who has this form of oppression committed against him to stand before the oppressor on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to him: "Take whatever you wish from his good deeds," as the Prophet said. Then the Prophet said: "What are your thoughts?"[1] i.e., what do you think he will leave from the perpetrator's good deeds?

Furthermore, if this crime is combined with the fact that the oppressed individual is a neighbor or a near relative, the oppression takes on a more serious form in that it includes a cutting of kinship or harm towards a neighbor. "None who cuts ties of kinship shall enter Paradise"[2] and "He will not enter Paradise, he whose neighbor is not secure from his wrongful conduct."[3]

If the infatuated person seeks the aid of the devils and evil spirits in reaching his objective, either through sorcery or the like, he has combined polytheism and oppression with the unbelief of magic. Even if he does not directly carry out the magic, he has approved of the unbelief in order to attain his objective, whilst this is not something completely alien to unbelief itself. In any case, any form of assistance in this regard is considered assistance in disobedience and transgression.

There are additional forms of far-reaching and harmful forms of oppression associated with the infatuated one attaining their objectives that are well known. If he attains the objective, there would also be further aims that he would be working towards and would require the help of his beloved one in obtaining them. Thus, both end up aiding one another in sin and transgression. One would aid the infatuated one in being the reason for oppression against their family, relatives, master or spouse and the infatuated one would be aiding one another in oppressing whoever they have to in order to attain their goal. Each one assists the other for their own gains that contain the oppression of others. Therefore, transgression and sin against the people happens due to their evil and oppressive cooperation, as has been the habitual case throughout history to the extent that some of them may endeavor to seek a position for the other that they are not worthy of or gain some wealth that they are undeserving of or exceed their boundaries with others. If their beloved one disputes with someone or complains about another individual, he would never hold a position against him, whether they are the oppressed or the oppressor. In addition to the oppression that emanates from the infatuated one towards the people from the various forms of ploys he employs to take the wealth of others or reach their beloved one through theft, force, betrayal or fake testimony or the likes. It could even reach the stage of murder in order to obtain the necessary wealth that will allow them to reach the one they are infatuated by.

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[1] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Rule, Chapter: The Sanctity of the Wives of the Fighters in the Cause of Allāh [1897] on the authority of Burayda

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Manners [5984] and collected by Muslim [2556].

[3] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith, Chapter: Clarifying the Impermissibility of Harming the Neighbor [46].

All of these ills and many more originate from an infatuation to unlawful images that could possibly even lead a person to unbelief. Numbers of individuals who were raised and nurtured upon Islām have actually become Christians due to an infatuation. Similar to the story of the man who would raise the call to the five daily prayers whose eyes became set on a Christian lady one day when he climbed the minaret to make the call to prayer. He became fond of her at first glance, so he descended and approached her and asked that she be his. She said that she is a Christian, so if you accept my religion, I shall marry you, so he did so. However, that day he climbed a set of stairs in her home, fell off the steps and died.

There was a time wherein if the Christians wished to make their captives accept their religion they would show them a beautiful woman and request that she seduce the captive, so that once his love for her is rooted in his heart, she offers herself to him if he enters her religion.

At which point:

يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ۚ وَيَفْعَلُ
ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿٢٧﴾

"Allāh keeps firm those who believe with the firm word in the worldly life and the Hereafter. And Allāh sends astray the wrongdoers, and Allāh does what He wills." [Ibrahim:27]

Yet each side in such an unlawful relationship of infatuation has wronged the other. Each one has oppressed themselves and the other, and their oppression transcends onto others, as previously mentioned. The most severe form of oppression above all is their polytheism that they commit, as this form of unlawful infatuation consists of every form of injustice.

If the one who the infatuated person is in love with does not fear Allāh, he or she could expose the infatuated one to destruction, and it is undoubtedly an injustice to further entice the infatuated one or beautify themselves for him or tempt him from every path until he gains his wealth and uses him to their advantage without allowing him to approach them so that he does not fulfill his need; hence, he torments him to his advantage. The infatuated one could go as far as murdering the one he is infatuated with. How many victims have been taken from both sides! How numerous are the blessings that have disappeared, how many have found themselves in poverty after richness, how low have people gone and how much has it destroyed unity! How numerous are the families that have been destroyed due to this, because if a woman notices that her husband is interested in someone else, she will also become interested in someone else. Thus, a man in this state will be at a loss between ruining his own household and remaining stable. Some people value the first and others value the second option.

A person should never allow the love of unlawful images to become ingrained in their feelings so that it does not lead him to any of these evil affairs. Whoever does so has neglected and deluded themselves, and he falls into ruin, he would have done it to himself. Had it not been for the constant staring at the one he is infatuated with and a desire to be with her, such an infatuation would not have taken hold of the heart in such a way, since the first step to infatuation is to have an admiration, whether it be through seeing or hearing.

However, if there is no covetousness in reaching this person and this is associated with the hopelessness of ever being with the person, infatuation does not arise. Also, if the individual is covetous in reaching their goal, but their thoughts divert them from such feelings and the heart does not become preoccupied with it, infatuation will not occur. But if he continues to think about the beauty of the one he is infatuated by coupled with a fear of something greater than attaining his objective, such as his fear of entering the Hellfire, the wrath of Allāh and the accumulation of sins whilst this feeling outweighs the eagerness and thoughts towards the one he loves, similarly, infatuation does not occur.

However, if he is devoid of this fear and replaces it with a fear of something worldly, such as a fear of self-destruction or loss of wealth or a fall in status amongst the people or those whom he respects, and this fear exceeds the factors of infatuation, it may repel it. Likewise, if he fears to lose a person who is more beloved to him that the one he is infatuated with and places the love of this person before the love of the one he is infatuated with, it can also be repelled.

However, if all of the above is nonexistent or the infatuation is too strong, the heart will become completely captivated and the soul shall become heavily inclined.

A Wrong Claim: "There Are Benefits to Being Infatuated'

If it is ever said: You have mentioned the ills, harms and blights of infatuation, if only you would mention the advantages and benefits now that include a softness in character, soothing of the soul, relaxation, noble manners - such as courage, generosity, magnanimity and a softness towards acquaintances and a kindness.

It was said to Yahya bin Mu'ath Ar-Razi: "Your son has become infatuated with so and so, he replied: 'All praise is due to Allāh Who led him to the natural feelings of a man.'"

Others have stated: "Infatuation is an illness of the heart for the noble ones."

Others have also stated: "Infatuation only happens to those of apparent upright moral character and pure manners, or to someone who possesses a virtuous tongue and excellent benevolence, or to someone of distinguished behavior or esteemed lineage."

Others have said: "Infatuation breeds bravery into the coward, filters the mind of the unintelligent, loosens the hand of the miserly honors the slave and settles any erratic behavior. It is the acquaintance for those who are lonely and the companion for those who do not have any company."

They go on to say that infatuation relaxes the soul and tends to one's manners, and that it is normal to express it but concealing it is burdensome.

Someone else said: "Whoever does not find joy in their soul from the tender voice or the radiant face has a corrupt disposition in need of healing." He wrote some words of poetry on this topic:

If you are not infatuated and you do not know what a desire is — then you
and the camel on the desert plain are the same

Another one said:

If you are not infatuated and you do not know what a desire is — then you
(might as well be) are a stone on the side of a solid rock

Another one said:

If you are not infatuated and you do not know what a desire is —then go
and feed on straw, because you are a donkey

Another one said:

If you are not infatuated and you do not know what a desire is — then you
have not experienced any of the pleasantries of this life

It was said to some of the infatuated ones who remained chaste: What would you do if you came across the person you were infatuated with? He replied: I would pleasure my feelings by looking a them, relax my heart by mentioning them and speaking to them, conceal whatever they would not like to be exposed and not undo our pact through what they dislike.

Ishaq bin Ibrahim[1] said: "The souls of the infatuated ones are pure and pleasant, their bodies are tender and light, being with them is enjoyable, their speech revives the dead hearts, enhances the minds and had it not been for infatuation and desires, there would not be any bliss in the worldly life."

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[1] He is Ishaq bin Ibrahim al-Musali, died 235 H. Not the Imām Ishaq biin Rahuya as found in some prints of this book.

Some Stories of Those Who Have Fallen Victim to Infatuation

Here is the story of Abū Bakr Muhammad bin Dawud Ath-Thahiri, the well-known scholar in the sciences of jurisprudence, Ḥadīth, Qur'ān exegesis and literature, who also has a school of thought in Islāmic jurisprudence and is from the major scholars. Yet his infatuation was well known.

Niftawayh said: "I visited him in his final illness before he passed away, so I said to him: 'How are you?' He replied: 'In love with the one who has led me to what you see now.' So I said to him: 'What stops you from being with them lawfully?' He replied: 'Gaining pleasure is two types: One is the permissible look and the other is the impermissible pleasure. It is the permissible look that led me to what you see now. As for the impermissible pleasure, I have been prohibited from it from what I have been informed by my father who said, 'I was informed by Suwayd bin Sa'īd, who said I was informed by Ali bin Mus-hir on the authority of Abū Yahya al-Qattat who narrates from Mujahid who narrates from Ibn Abbas in a narration that is ascribed to the Prophet: 'Whoever becomes infatuated and conceals their love, is chaste and is patient, Allāh shall forgive him and admit him into Paradise.'"

The Uppermost Happiness and the Bliss of the Heart

Here is a mightily significant issue that any intelligent person should pay attention to. It is that the complete pleasure, joy and happiness and bliss within the heart along with the elation of the soul depends on two things:

The first: The level of love and beauty the beloved one holds within the soul of the individual, and that the beloved one becomes more beloved to him than anything else.

The second: The level of this love, the devotion of one's capabilities in loving Him whilst preferring a nearness to Him and meeting Him over all else.

Intellectual people will understand that the level of pleasure that is achieved after attaining their beloved objective depends on the initial strength of the love itself. Thus, the stronger the love, the stronger and more complete the pleasure attained. The pleasure that someone who is suffering from severe thirst once he obtained fresh water and the one who feels sever hunger once he obtains delicious food and the like depends on the yearning, need and love for such things.

Once this is known, it also becomes subsequently known that this pleasure, happiness and joy is something sought after by the soul, in fact, it is the objective of every living person. Since this is the case, it becomes something dispraise worthy if it is of the kind that results in a greater pain or prevents someone from attaining a pleasure that is better and more noble than it. So how would it be if it results in the greatest regret and causes the greatest luxuries and joys to be squandered? Yet it is praised if it aids a person to achieve the ultimate pleasure that is unspoiled, which is the pleasure that is experienced in the hereafter and the bliss and pleasant life one experiences within it.

Allāh said:

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴿١٦﴾ وَٱلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿١٧﴾

"But you prefer the worldly life, while the hereafter is better and more enduring." [al-A'la:16-17]

And the magicians said to the Pharoah once they embrace the belief of Prophet Moses:

فَاقْضِ مَا أَنتَ قَاضٍ ۖ إِنَّمَا تَقْضِي هَٰذِهِ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا إِنَّا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطَايَانَا وَمَا
أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ السِّحْرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ

"Order whatever you are to order, you can only order for this worldly life. Indeed, we have believed in our Lord that He may forgive us of our sins and what you compelled us [to do] of magic. And Allāh is better and more enduring." [Ta Ha:72-73]

Allāh created this creation to allow them to taste this permanent pleasure in the eternal abode. As for this worldly life, it will come to an end and its pleasures will never be absolutely pure nor will they last forever, as opposed to the afterlife because its pleasures are everlasting, its bliss is absolute and pure of any hardship or pain, in it lies all that the souls desire and the eyes find delight in as well as it being an eternal abode. And no soul truly knows what Allāh has concealed for His servants from the blissful sights. In fact, this abode of Paradise contains what no eye has ever seen, nor what any ear has heard nor what any heart has ever felt.

This was the intended meaning of that sincere advisor to his people wherein he said:

يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱتَّبِعُونِ أَهۡدِكُمۡ سَبِيلَ ٱلرَّشَادِ ۝٣٨ يَٰقَوۡمِ إِنَّمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا مَتَٰعٞ وَإِنَّ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ
ٱلۡقَرَارِ ۝٣٩

"O my people, follow me, I will guide you to the way of right conduct. O my people, this worldly life is only temporary enjoyment, and indeed, the hereafter – that is the home of permanent settlement." [Ghafir:38-39]

Hence, he declared to them that this life is used as a tool to seek the pleasure of the Afterlife and that the afterlife is the permanent settlement.

Once someone realizes that the luxuries of this life are merely a temporary enjoyment and a means to the pleasures of the afterlife and that this is the very reason that this world was created for, then it becomes clear that any pleasure that aids and facilitates towards the ultimate pleasure in the Hereafter is not to be dispraised if it is obtained; rather it should be welcomed according to its effectiveness in connecting the person to the delights of the Hereafter.

A Response to the Claim

The response to this claim is as follows –and Allāh is the One Who grants success. Commenting on this topic must be done so with distinction between what is permissible, beneficial and harmful. It cannot be loosely deemed as dispraiseworthy or rejected or praised or accepted. Its ruling and complete affair can only be revealed once we define what it is restricted to; however, this form of love in itself is not praised or dispraised in an absolute manner. Here we shall mention the beneficial, harmful, permissible and impermissible forms of this level of love.

One must know that the most beneficial, obligatory, highest and most noble type of love is the type that is directed to the One Who the hearts have been created to love and the natural inclination of the creation has a predisposition to worship alone. It is the reason for the creation of the heavens and the earth and the natural disposition of every creature. It is the subtle secret within the testimony that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh, as the word (deity) refers to the one who the hearts devote their worship to through love, glorification, humility and servitude; thus, worshiping the deity.

However, worship is never correct unless it is devoted to Allāh alone, as (worship) is the complete devotion of love along with complete servitude and humility. Polytheism in this act of worship is from the most severe forms of injustice that Allāh does not forgive (if a person does not repent from it in their lifetime). Allāh The Most High is loved for His Essence, whereas anyone else is to be loved for His sake. Every revealed Book or Scripture, call of a Messenger, natural disposition of His creation, the sound intellect He has afforded them and the innumerable blessings He has provided them with all indicate the obligation of loving Allāh. This is because the hearts are naturally inclined and created to love the one who blesses them and is benevolent to them. So how about the One Who provides all benevolence and every blessing that touches His creation is from Him alone without any partner, as Allāh says:

وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ ٱلضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْـَٔرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

"And whatever you have of favor, it is from Allāh. Then when adversity touches you, to Him you cry for help." [An-Nahl:53]

This is all an indication, along with the knowledge of His Perfect Names and Attributes and the evidence that is clear within His perfect creation and Majesty and Might over all things.

There are two causes that bring about the emotion of love: One is beauty and the other is benevolence, and The Lord possesses absolute perfection in both of them. He is beautiful and loves beauty. In fact, He possesses perfect beauty. Thus, there is no one else who is loved for their essence except Him. Allāh says:

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ﴿٣١﴾

"Say to them [Muhammadﷺ], if you love Allāh, then follow me and Allāh will love you." [Aal-ʿImrān:31]

Allāh also says:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَن يَرۡتَدَّ مِنكُمۡ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَسَوۡفَ يَأۡتِي ٱللَّهُ بِقَوۡمٖ يُحِبُّهُمۡ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ أَذِلَّةٍ
عَلَى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ يُجَٰهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوۡمَةَ لَآئِمٖۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضۡلُ
ٱللَّهِ يُؤۡتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥٤ إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤۡتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُمۡ رَٰكِعُونَ ٥٥ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ فَإِنَّ
حِزۡبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ ٥٦

"You who have believed, whoever of you should convert from his religion – Allāh will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him, humble towards the believer, powerful against the disbelievers, they strive in the cause of Allāh and do not fear the blame of the critics. This is the favor of Allāh, He bestows it upon whom He wills, and Allāh is all-encompassing all knowing. Your ally is none but Allāh and thereafter His messenger and those who have believed – those who establish prayer and give the *zakat,* and they prostrate in worship. And whoever is an ally of Allāh and His messenger and those who have believed – indeed, they are the party of Allāh, they will be the predominant." [al-Mā'idah:54-56]

The origin of alliance is love, it cannot be achieved without love. Just as the origin for enmity is hatred. Allāh is the ally of the believers and they are allied to Him, they have this allegiance to Him due to their love for Him and He also is their ally since He loves them. Therefore, Allāh is an ally to His servants according to their love for Him. Hence, he has rebuked those who take allies besides Him, as opposed to those who love His allies as they have not taken partners besides Him, rather, their love for the allies of Allāh is part of their excellence in the alliance to Allāh.

He has also rebuked the one who equates the love they have for Him with others and informed us that whoever does this has taken that object as a partners besides Him, loving this partner as they love Allāh, but those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh. He has also informed us that those who perpetrated such an act of equating between Allāh and others in their love will address those they used to worship besides Allāh when they are in the fire by saying:

تَٱللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٧﴾ إِذۡ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

"By Allāh, we were indeed in manifest error, when we equated you to the Lord of creation." [Ash-Shu'ara:97-98]

Due to this monotheism and singling Allāh in this form of love in worship, Allāh sent forth the messengers, revealed all the divine Books, encompasses the message of every messenger and created the heavens and the earth. He set paradise for those who actualize this form of worship and the hellfire for the polytheists who associate partners with Him.

The Prophet has sworn that none shall truly attain the highest point of faith (until I become more beloved to them than their child, parent and all of the people)[1]. So what about the love of The Lord Mighty and Majestic?!

The Prophet also said to Umar bin al-Khattab [regarding attaining complete faith]: "No Umar, until I am more beloved to you than your own self." One shall not attain a complete level of faith until their love for the Prophet reaches such a level. Since the Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves in having love for, so is the Lord of all creation, Mighty and Majestic Who possesses the perfect Names and Attributes Who there is none worthy of worship besides Him more deserving of love than their own selves?

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Faith [15] and collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith [44].

Everything that Allāh grants His believing servants calls them to devote the act of worship of love to Him whether it is something that the servant is pleased with or otherwise. Therefore, when Allāh gives or denies, grants well-being or calamity, constricts or eases, His justice or benevolence, causes death or gives life, bestows kindness, mercy or benevolence, conceals faults and pardons, shows patience and forbearance in dealing with His servants, responding to a persons supplications, reliving someone of difficulties, rescuing an individual from severe constraint, easing hardships – without a single need for Himself to do so, in fact, He does all this whilst being independent and completely self-sufficient in every aspect. All of which draw the hearts to worship Him alone and devote the worship of love to Him alone.

Rather, the physical allowance that He affords His servants when the servants chooses to disobey Him, concealing him at the moment of disobedience until the individual has satisfied themselves with sin under His watchful Sight whilst the individual uses the assistance of the bounties His Lord has provided him with in the act, all of which is from the most powerful driving motives to love Him alone. Surely, if a member from the creation treated another person with the smallest example of this, he would not be able to withhold his own heart from loving that person, so how can someone not love the One Who consistently bestows benevolence to them as often as breaths are taken, despite the individual's wrongdoing?

His goodness always showers the creation even though the servant presents sins, Allāh grants them all the means to love Him by affording the creation His favors whilst He is not in need of their actions, yet the servants presents sins even though he is in dire need of Allāh! Hence, he failed to deter himself from disobedience in light of Allāh's benevolence and bounties that He bestowed on him, yet the servant's disobedience and treachery did not sever the benevolence of his Lord to him!

Treachery diverts the heart from loving someone who holds such a characteristic and connects it with someone else.

Additionally, anyone of the creation whom you may love or loves you in return does so for their own benefit or an interest, but Allāh calls you to love Him for your own benefit as has been mentioned in the *Qudsi* narration: "My servants, each want each other for themselves, but I call you for yourselves." Thus, how can one not feel ashamed that his Lord is of this perfect and lofty status whilst they turn away from Him, busied by a love for someone else whose heart has become engrossed with the love of someone besides Him?

Additionally, there are those amongst the creation that will not interact with you if they cannot profit from you, and there must be a benefit for them in the interaction. However, you Lord deals with you so that you may obtain the highest and mightiest form of profit. The action is equivalent to ten of its kind in deeds and can be multiplied up to seven hundred times and much more, whereas the evil deed is only equivalent to itself and can be swiftly erased. He created you to serve Him and created everything else in the worldly life and the hereafter for you.

So who then can be more deserving of devoting our full capabilities and exerting our efforts in pleasing? Also, the demands and needs of the entire creation are within His scope, He is the most generous and the most giving who gives His servants their needs before they ask and in a manner that far exceeds their expectations. He is grateful for the little that someone may put forth from actions and makes it develop and prosper whilst He forgives much of the mishaps that occur from the people and erases it.

يَسْـَٔلُهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِى شَأْنٍ ٢٩

"Whoever is in the heavens and the earth asks Him, everyday He is bringing about a matter." [Ar-Rahman:29]

He is not distracted by the many voices or sounds, nor is He mistaken due to the numerous demands of the creation or becomes uneasy due to the persistent invocations of those who consistently ask, rather He becomes pleased at this level of insistent supplication. He loves to be invoked and becomes angered if they creation abandon asking Him. He is shy at particular times from His servants wherein they do not have shyness before Him, He conceals their faults at times they wish to reveal their ills and has mercy on them at times they do not have mercy on themselves. He attracts them through His blessings and benevolence to His honor and pleasure, yet they refuse. He then sent His Messengers for this task along with sent along with them the covenant. Then He descends Himself (during the last third of every night) and said: "Who will ask Me so that I can give him what he asked for? Who will ask for My forgiveness so I may forgive them?"

As the poet mentioned in this regard:

I call you to connect, but you refuse — I send my messenger for the cause
I descend to you myself — I find you amongst those who are asleep

How can the hearts not love the one who solely brings good, the one who solely eradicates the bad deeds, responds to the supplications, wipes away the faults, forgives the sins, conceals the blemishes, relieves from difficulties, rescues from hardships and fulfills the wants? Thus, He is "The most deserving of remembrance, the most deserving of our gratitude, the only one deserving of worship, the most deserving of praise, the best in assistance, the most compassionate of all who reign, the most generous of all those who have been asked, the most giving of anyone who ever gave, the most merciful of anyone who has been asked for mercy and the most noble of all those who have been intended."

He is the most honorable of all those that have been turned to and sufficient is He for the one who relies on Him. He is more merciful to His creation than a mother is to her child, He is more pleased with the repentance of His servants than the one who lost their riding beast in the barren desert with all of his provisions on it having despaired of life, then found it all in front of him.

He is the sovereign King without any partners, alone without any equal. All must perish except Him. He is not obeyed without His permission and not disobeyed without His knowledge. When He is obeyed, He bestows gratitude even though it is only through His guidance and blessings that one can do so. He is disobeyed, yet He forgives and pardons even though it is His right that the creature has fallen short in.

He is the closest witness and the most exalted protector. He is the most loyal and just. He protected the person from their own soul, took by their forelocks, prescribed every occurrence and determined the time spans of every life. So the hearts incline to Him and all secrets are open to Him. The unseen is always unveiled to Him and every creature has a yearning and dire need for Him.

All the faces will be humbled before the light of His Face whilst the hearts are unable to truly and fully comprehend His true essence, and the natural inclination of man along with every possible evidence proves that it is impossible for Him to be of resemblance to anything or anyone. The darkness becomes light from the light of His Face illuminating the heavens and the earth. The Prophet said: "He does not sleep, and it does not befit Him to sleep. He lowers the scales and raises them. The deed done in the night is raised to Him before the day, and the deed of the day is raised to Him before the night. His Veil is light, and if He were to remove it, the glory of His Face would burn everything of His creation as far as His sight reaches."[1]

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[1] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Faith [167].

The Greatest and Undisputed Blessing in the Hereafter

Once the above is acknowledged, it must also be known that the greatest blessing and pleasure in the Hereafter is to gaze at the Face of The Lord Mighty and Majestic, to hear His Speech from Him directly and to be near Him, as it has been authentically reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim: "By Allāh, He has not given them anything more beloved to them than to look at Him."[1]

In another narration: "Certainly if He appears before them and they see Him, they will forget the other blessings they have been bestowed."[2]

Also collected by An-Nasā'ī and al-Imām Aḥmad on the authority of Ammar bin Yasir who reports that the Prophet said in his supplication: "I ask you to afford me the pleasure of gazing at your Face and the yearning desire to meet You."

Also, in the book entitled *al-Sunnah* by Abdullah ibn al-Imām Aḥmad that has been ascribed to the Prophet: "It would be as if the people never heard the Qur'ān on the Day of Resurrection once they hear it from Ar-Rahman, it would be as if they had not heard it before that."

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[1] Book of Faith [181].

[2] Collected by Ibn Mājah [184].

How Does a Person Attain This Ultimate Pleasure?

Once the above has been established, it must also be known that the most powerful means to attain this pleasure is through actualizing the greatest pleasure that can be experienced in this worldly life, which is the pleasure of knowing Allāh and the pleasure of loving Him. That is the paradise and uppermost blessing of this worldly life, and the other pleasures in the life besides it are only like a sprinkle of water on the ocean in comparison, as the soul and the heart were only created for that sole purpose.

The most pleasant part of this worldly life is knowing and loving Allāh, and the most pleasant part of the Paradise in the Hereafter is seeing Allāh and being a witness to that blessing. Loving and knowing Allāh is the delight of the eyes, the enjoyment of the soul, the joy of the heart and the ultimate blessing and bliss of this worldly life. In fact, the temporary pleasures of this life which disconnect a person from that great pleasure will become a source of pain and torment for them, and that individual will remain in an impoverished life as the pleasant life can only be with and by Allāh.

Some of the people who actually felt this pleasure in this life would experience moments in their lives when they would exclaim: "If the people of Paradise experience a similar condition to ours, they are undoubtedly in a pleasant life!"

Others have said: "If the kings and the offspring of the kings knew the feelings we experience, they would have fought us for it with their swords."

Now the one who has been afflicted with the harmful form of love and infatuation that is a means of torment on the heart of the person in love says the following:

The real people are only those who are infatuated, people of desires — there isn't any good in one who does not love or is infatuated

Another says:

Pittance to the worldly life whenever there isn't — a person in love or someone beloved

Another says:

There isn't any good in this life or its bliss — whilst you are alone and lonely not infatuated

Another says:

Settle with something you find pleasure in loving — time has passed whilst you are still alone

If this is the case with the above form of illegitimate love, what value are we to have for the type of love that is the life of the hearts and nourishment to the soul that the heart cannot find any pleasure, bliss, success or life without. If the heart becomes void of it, a person's pain intensifies through the eye that loses its insight, the ear that loses its true sense of hearing, the nose that loses its true sense of smell and the tongue that begins to speak inappropriately. Moreover, the corruption of the heart if it loses the love for the Creator and Sustainer and the One who solely deserves to be worshipped is more of a detrimental loss than the body losing its soul. However, this is a matter that can only be truly comprehended and believed by the one who possesses the true essence of life within them, as the wound does not cause pain to the dead!

The intent behind this is to establish that the greatest pleasures of this worldly life are the reasons that link a person to the greatest pleasure in the Hereafter.

The Pleasures of the Worldly Life Are Three (Generic) Types

The most paramount and complete one of them is whatever links the creation to the pleasure of the Hereafter. The believer is rewarded for whatever good he does, as long as the intention is for the sake of Allāh whether it be consumption of food and drink, clothing, intimacy with a spouse or subduing the enemy of Allāh and his own enemy (Satan). So imagine the reward for the belief and knowledge of Allāh, loving Him as He should be loved, longing to meet Him and yearning to see His Noble Face in the eternal abode of bliss.

The second type: A pleasure that denies from the pleasure of the Hereafter and results in a greater pain, such as the illegitimate pleasure of those who worship idols besides Allāh with a bond of affection between them in the worldly life, they love them as they should love Allāh taking advantage of each other, as they shall declare in the Hereafter when they meet their Lord:

رَبَّنَا ٱسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَغْنَآ أَجَلَنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَجَّلْتَ لَنَاۚ قَالَ ٱلنَّارُ مَثْوَىٰكُمْ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا
مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّى بَعْضَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

"Our Lord, some of us made use of others, and we have reached our term which You appointed for us. He will say: The fire is your residence wherein you will abide eternally, except for what Allāh wills. Indeed, your Lord is Wise and Knowing. And thus, will We make some of the wrongdoers allies of one another for what they used to earn." [al-An'ām:128-129]

This is in addition to the forbidden pleasures of unlawful lewdness, oppression, tyranny on the earth or exaltedness without due right. In reality, these forbidden pleasures are a progressive allurement from Allāh to those whom rightfully deserve it in order to afford them the sternest torment and deny them, through their own actions, the ultimate pleasure. It is a similitude equivalent to someone who serves a delicious dish that has been poisoned in order to allure them to their destruction.

سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُم مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٢﴾ وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ﴿١٨٣﴾

Allāh said: "We will progressively lead them from where they do not know." [al-Aʿrāf:182-183]

Some of the scholars of the Pious Predecessors would say in explanation to this verse: 'It means that on every occasion they perpetrate a sin, we produce an indulgence for them.'

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَرِحُوا۟ بِمَآ أُوتُوٓا۟ أَخَذْنَـٰهُم بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ ۚ
وَٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

"Until when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly and they were in despair. So the people who committed wrong were eliminated. And praise to Allāh Lord of creation." [al-Anʿām:44-45]

Allāh also said regarding such people:

أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُم بِهِۦ مِن مَّالٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ بَل لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

"Do they think that We extend to them of wealth and children. Because We hasten for them good things? Rather, they do not perceive." [al-Mu'minūn:55-56]

He also mentioned in their regard:

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُهُمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

"So let not their wealth or their children impress you. Allāh only intends to punish them through them in this worldly life and that their souls should depart [at death] while they are disbelievers." [At-Tawbah:55]

Such indulgences will only conclude as sources of the strongest pains, as the poet wrote:

Things in this life that were delightful for some — became torment in the hereafter

The third type: The love towards the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. I mean the exclusive love towards him by this. It is the love that occupies the heart, thoughts and mention with the one they love. Hence, every Muslim has love for Allāh and His Messenger within their heart, and none can embrace the religion of Islām without this; however, the people vary in degree of their love along a vast scope that only Allāh can truly know.

This is the type of love that relieves the soul, lightens the burdens and duties, makes the miserly generous, emboldens the coward, cleanses the mind, disciplines the inner-self, improves the standard of life to its true reality, and it is not the type of love and infatuation one may have towards forbidden images. Thus, when the innermost secrets are uncovered on the Day of Judgment, such an individual shall have the purest amongst all the servants. As the poet mentioned:

Within your heart will remain — an inner feeling of love on the day the secrets are revealed

It is the type of love that illuminates the face, relaxes and expands the chest and revives the heart.

The Love for the Speech of Allāh

Similarly, the love for the speech of Allāh is a sign that indicates the love for Allāh. If you ever wish to identify the level of love you or anyone else holds towards Allāh, then ascertain the love you have in your heart for the Qur'ān and whether the pleasure you gain from listening to the Qur'ān is greater than the pleasure gained by those who listen to songs and musical instruments. It is well known that whoever loves someone will also love to hear their speech and address. As has been mentioned:

If you claim to love me — then why have you abandoned my book

Have you not considered what it contains — from the delights of my speech?

Uthman bin 'Affan –Allāh be pleased with him- mentioned: "If our hearts were pure, we would never become tired of the speech of Allāh."

How can one ever have enough of the speech of the One they love whilst He is also the One he ultimately seeks to please.

The Prophet said to Ibn Mas'ūd one day: "Recite to me." Ibn Mas'ūd replied: "Recite to you, whilst it is you who receives this revelation?" He said: "I love to hear it from others." So Ibn Mas'ūd began to recite from the chapter *An-Nisa'* until he reached the verse:

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٤١﴾

"So how will it be when We bring from every nation a witness and We bring you [O Muhammad ﷺ] against these people as a witness." [An-Nisa':41]

Ibn Mas'ūd said: At that point, the Prophet said: "Do not recite any further," then he raised his head and I saw that tears were streaming along his face from the crying.[1]

Additionally, if the Companions were to gather alongside Abū Musa being amongst them, they would say: "Abū Musa, remind us of our Lord," so he would recite whilst they listen.

Those who love the Qur'ān find a pleasure, delight, sweetness and joy that far exceeds whatever those who listen to the music will ever find. If you come across someone who finds delight and excitement in listening to poetry or music over the Qur'ān, it is as the poet said:

The Qur'ān is read to you — yet you are unmoved like a rock
But a line from poetry is recited to you — and you swerve to it like a drunk

It is from the strongest signs that such a person's heart is void or deficient of the love for Allāh and His speech and connected to the satanic tunes, whilst the deluded one will believe that they are traversing the correct path. Hence, the love towards Allāh, His speech and His Messenger is far greater than what the claimant has falsely mentioned regarding the benefits of infatuation. In fact, there is not a form of love that is more beneficial than it, and any other love other than it is wrong unless it aids in this cause or implants a desire for it.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of the Virtues of the Qur'ān, Chapter: Crying Whilst the Qur'ān Is Recited [5055]. Also collected by Muslim in The Book of the Prayer of the Traveler [800].

The Love of Women

As for the love of women, one cannot be censured for it. Rather, it is from the excellence of man. Allāh bestowed a favor on His servants as mentioned in His statement:

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓاْ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ
إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

"And from His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought." [Ar-Rum:21]

He made the woman a source of tranquility for the man whereby his heart settles for her, then placed pure love between them, which is a type of love that is merged with mercy. After mentioning the lawful and unlawful measures as it relates to women in the Qur'ān, Allāh then mentioned:

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا۟ مَيْلًا
عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَخُلِقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

"Allāh wants to make clear to you and guide you to good practices of those before you and to accept your repentance, and Allāh is of Perfect knowledge and Wisdom. Allāh wants to accept your repentance, but those who follow their passions want you to digress into a great deviation. Allah wishes to lighten (the burden) for you; and man was created weak." [An-Nisa':26-28]

Sufyan Ath-Thawrī mentioned a statement in his exegesis that was narrated on the authority of Ibn Ṭawūs cited from his father who said: "If one gazes at a woman, he will not be able to withhold himself."

Also collected in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim on the authority of Jabir who narrated that the Prophet saw a woman, so he returned to his wife, Zainab, and was intimate with her, then he said:

"Indeed a woman may approach in a devilish manner, and wander off in a devilish manner. So if any of you see a woman and are impressed by her, he should return to his spouse as that will repel whatever desire has arisen in himself."[1]

This narration contains numerous benefits:

From them is a guidance and direction to find solace by finding the solution to the issue with something of the same kind. Just as food may be an alternative for another type of food and clothing can be an alternative for other forms of clothing.

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[1] Collected by Muslim in The Book of Marriage [1403].

Likewise, the command to remedy this feeling of excitement that has kindled the desires by using the best solution, which is to be intimate with your own spouse as it will quell the urge. It is also the guidance found in the narration collected in *Sunan* Ibn Mājah[1]: "Nothing is like marriage for the two who love each other." Marrying someone whom you are passionately in love with is the cure to this infatuation, and it is the remedy that Allāh has legislatively decreed and otherwise.

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[1] [1847]

The Story of Zainab bint Jahsh –May Allāh Be Pleased With Her

As for the story of Zainab bint Jahsh –may Allāh be pleased with her- it was the case that Zayd made the decision to divorce her, but she was unwilling. He would consult the Prophet in this matter, but he would advise him to remain with her. After some time, it became evident to the Messenger of Allāhﷺ that Zayd would inevitably separate from her, so he thought to marry her if Zayd were to divorce her, but also became uneasy that the people would spread that he married the woman who was married to a son he previously adopted, as he had adopted Zayd before Prophet-hood. However, the Lord of creation has decreed a legislation that is comprehensive for the benefits of all creation. So when Zayd divorced her and her waiting period had ended, he called her behind the door and said: "Zaynab, the Messenger of Allāhﷺ would like to marry you." She replied: "I will not proceed with anything until I seek guidance from my Lord." She then went to her place of prayer and performed the prayer. Allāh authorized her marriage with the Messenger of Allāhﷺ and set the contract from above His Throne, and the verse was also revealed accordingly:

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَٰكَهَا ﴿٣٧﴾

"So when Zayd had parted from her, We married her to you." [al-Ahzab:37]

Thereafter, the Messenger of Allāhﷺ consummated the marriage. She would hold it as an honor over the other wives of the Prophet by saying:

"You were all married off by your families, but I was married off by Allāh from above the seven heavens."

This is the story of the Messenger of Allāhﷺ with Zainab.

There is no doubt that women were beloved (in a lawful manner) to the Prophet, as the narration in *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī states on the authority of Anas who cites that the Messenger of Allāhﷺ said: "From the affairs of this world of yours I have been made fond of [are] women, pleasant fragrances, and the prayer has been made a sweetness to my eye."[1] This is the exact wording of the narration, not as others have narrated: "I have been made fond of three things in this world..." The Jews envied him for this and exclaimed: "He has no other concern other than marriage," so Allāh rebuked them on behalf of His Prophet and defended him, he said:

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۖ فَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ ءَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ
وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مُّلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾

"Or do they envy people for what Allāh has given them of His bounty? But we had already given the family of Abraham the Scripture and Wisdom and conferred upon them a great kingdom." [An-Nisa':54]

This is the especially dear friend of Allāh, the Imām of the monotheists who married Sarah who was the most beautiful of women and took Hajir under his guardianship. The Messenger of Allāhﷺ was asked who the most beloved person to him is, and he replied: "Aisha."

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[1] Also collected by An-Nisa'i [3939,3940] and Imām Aḥmad 3/128 [12315].

He also said about Khadija: "Indeed, I have been afforded a love for her."[1] Hence, a love of women is from the excellence of man. Ibn Abbas said: "The best amongst you from this nation is the one with the most wives."[2]

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[1] Collected by Muslim in The Virtues of the Companions, Chapter: The Virtue of Khadija [2435].

[2] Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Marriage [5069] on the authority of Sa'īd bin Jubayr. Ibn Hajar has stated in his explanation to al-Bukhārī, *Fath al-Bari [9/114]:* 'It is evident here that Ibn Abbas has used the term 'the best' to refer to the Prophet'.

The Merciful Intercession the Prophet and His Successors Would Make for Others

The Prophet attempted to intercede on behalf of a man who was in love with a woman so that they can be wed, but she refused. This is in the story of Mughith and Barīrah. One day the Prophet saw him walking behind her after they had separated as tears ran downs his cheeks, so the Prophet said to her: "If only you would take him back as a husband." She replied: "Do you command me to do so, Messenger of Allāh ﷺ?" He said: "No, but I would like to intercede on his behalf." She said: "I do not desire him." Then the Prophet said to his uncle: "Abbas, are you not amazed at the love that Mughith has for Barīrah, and the aversion she has for him?"[1] The Prophet did not scold him for his love towards her, even though she had separated from him, because this is something not within his control. The Prophet would balance his love for his wives as much as he could and supplicate by saying: "Allāh, this is what I can control, do not hold me to account for what is not within my control."[2] This means the love of the heart. Allāh says:

وَلَن تَسْتَطِيعُوٓاْ أَن تَعْدِلُواْ بَيْنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْۖ ١٢٩

"And you will never be able to be equal in feeling between wives even if you should strive to do so." [An-Nisa':129]

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[1] On the authority of Ibn Abbas. Collected by al-Bukhārī in The Book of Divorce [5283].

[2] Collected by Abū Dāwūd [2134] At-Tirmidhī [1140] An-Nasā'ī [3943] Ibn Mājah [1971] Imām Aḥmad 6/144 [25111].

This means in love and intimacy. The rightly guided and merciful caliphs continued in this manner as it pertains to those who loved one another to this degree who could potentially be lawfully married, as we have alluded to with the caliphs Abū Bakr and Uthman.

An Infatuation Can Fall into One of Three Categories

Infatuation that can be used as obedience to Allāh. It is the infatuation someone may have towards his wife. This type of love may be beneficial as it may attract a person to fulfill the objective for which marriage was legislated, it also leads a person to divert their gaze and innermost feelings from anyone other than their spouse. Therefore, this particular person who is in love may be commended by the people and approved of by Allāh.

There is another type of infatuation, it is the type that is detested by Allāh, an estrangement from His mercy and is the most harmful thing upon an individual in his worldly life and for their affair in the Hereafter. This is the love of young hairless boys. Nobody has ever been trialed with such a thing except that they have lost their entire honor in the sight of Allāh, He expels him from any nearness to Him and distances this individual's heart from having a connection with Him.

It is from the most powerful veils that conceal him from Allāh, as some of the Pious Predecessors have mentioned: If a person's status falls before Allāh, he is trialed with a love for young hairless boys. This is the type of obsession that warranted the punishment that befell the people who the Prophet Lūṭ was sent to, it only occurred through this type of infatuation. Allāh said:

لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

"By your life [O Muhammadﷺ], indeed they were in their wild intoxication, they were wandering blindly." [al-Hijr:72]

However, the remedy for this illness is to seek the assistance of the One Who turns the hearts, and an honest refuge with Him, occupying oneself with His remembrance, increasing in His love and nearness and contemplating over the pain that this type of infatuation results in, the pleasure that is squandered and thus an individual will consequently lose out on the greatest beloved One and instead gain the greatest harm. So if the soul inclines to this type of action and gives it some preference, he should consider himself amongst the dead and should come to know that a great calamity has befallen him.

The third type of infatuation is the kind that is permissible in and of itself, but the individual they are infatuated with is beyond their reach. Such as a man who is wildly in love with a beautiful woman that has been described to him, or a woman he accidently set his eyes on which resulted in an infatuation of this woman, yet this infatuation did not bring about a sin on his part.

Hence, it is beyond his reach and shall not be reprimanded for it. It is better for this person to repel these feelings and occupy oneself with something more beneficial. It is imperative for such an individual to suppress [such feelings], guard his own chastity and remain patient in this trial he has been afflicted with. Consequently, Allāh will reward him for this and compensate him for his sincere patience, his guarding of his chastity and for not yielding to his desires whilst valuing the pleasure of Allāh and the reward He affords over all else.

The Infatuated Ones Fall into Three Categories

Those who are infatuated by any beauty, and there are those who have placed restrictions and are infatuated by a particular type of beauty, and there are those who do not become infatuated by anyone who they cannot reach.

Within and between the above three categories are varying degrees of strength and weakness. The one who fits the first category who is infatuated by any beauty will find themselves wandering in every distant valley having an interest in any beautiful image.

One day in Juzwa and one day in 'Uthayb and one — day in al-'Aqeeq and another in Khulaysa

Sometimes turning to Najd and at times — along the paths of Al'Aqeeq and at times in Tayma'

This is an expansive and far-reaching infatuation, and it is unstable and constantly changing.

He contemplates about this one then he becomes infatuated with the other — and forgets them from time to time

The one who has placed restrictions to the beauty is more fixed over the one they are infatuated by and may have a longer lasting feeling of love towards them, and this love is stronger than the love of the one who falls into the first category due to it being concentrated on a particular person and the other being divided and scattered. However, it is weakened by the incapability of reaching them. Thus, the infatuated one who is realistic in achieving their objective is the most astute one, and this love is stronger because the reality of assists them and strengthens them.

A Study of the Narration: "Whoever Becomes Infatuated and Remains Chaste, Suppresses and Then Dies Is a Martyr."

This narration has been cited by Suwayd bin Sa'īd, but the scholars of Islām have rejected its authenticity via him. Ibn 'Adi said: "This is one of the narrations that have been rejected via Suwayd." The same was determined by al-Bayhaqī and Ibn Tahir and Abul-Faraj bin Jawzī and held it to be from the fabricated narrations through this chain of transmission. Abū Abdullah al-Hakim has also rejected the authenticity of this narration and commented: "I am surprised it has been narrated."

I say: It is evident that this narration is from the speech of Ibn Abbas – may Allāh be pleased with him- and the narration is *Mawquf* as far as Ibn Abbas, and Suwayd was mistaken in attributing it to the Prophet. This speech also does not resemble the speech of the Prophet.

As for the narration of al-Khaṭīb on the authority of Az-Zuhrī who cites: We have been informed by al-Mu'afa bin Zakariyyah, who cites from Qutba bin al-Fadl, who cites from Aḥmad bin Muhammad bin Masruq, who cites from Suwayd, who cites from Ibn Mushir on the authority of Hisham bin 'Urwah, on the authority of his father, on the authority of Aisha who raises it as the statement of the Prophet. However, this is a clear mistake. The transmission of Hisham from his father from Aisha is unauthentic and unaccepted by anyone who has as much as smelt the science of the Ḥadīth. And I testify before Allāh that Aisha never narrated this narration from the Prophet, nor did 'Urwah narrate it from her, nor did Hisham ever narrate it from his father.

As for the narration that has been presented via Ibn Majishun who cites from Abdul-Aziz bin Abi Hatim, who cites from In Abi Najih, on the authority of Mujahid who narrates from Ibn Abbas who attributes the narration to the Prophet, then it is also a lie against Ibn Majishun, as he did not narrate this narration nor did Az-Zubayr bin Bakkar narrate it from him. Rather, it is something that has been conjured up by the fabricators. Subhan Allāh! How could this text ever be connected to this chain of transmission?! May Allāh disgrace the fabricators!

It has also been cited by Abul-Faraj on the authority of Muhammad bin Ja'far bin Sahl who cites from Ya'qub bin Isa from the son of Abdur-Rahman bin 'Awf, on the authority of Ibn Abi Najih, who cites from Mujahid. This is also erroneous because Muhammah bin Ja'far as mentioned in the chain of transmission is someone who is also known by the name 'al-Kharaiti'. His death was in the year 327 Hijrī. Therefore, it would have been impossible for him to narrate from Ya'qub bin Abi Najih. Additionally, 'al-Kharaiti' is known to be among the weak narrators of Ḥadīth and has been mentioned as such by Abul-Faraj in the book 'Ad-Du'āfā' (the weak narrators).

The conclusion and studies of the scholars of Islām in rejecting this particular narration is the scale we use, and it is they who are referred to in this knowledge. Furthermore, it has not been authenticated or graded as *ḥasan* by anyone of fine repute and is a reference in the knowledge of *Ḥadīth,* nor has it been authenticated by those who tend to portray leniency in their grading of narrations, as even they could not draw themselves to authenticate it. It is sufficient that a man such as Ibn Tahir, who was known to be lenient in authenticating the narrations that fit the doctrine of Sufism, narrating various texts in that regard that are clearly unauthentic has also declared the narration mentioned above as unauthentic.

It is correct though that this narration is not rejected pertaining to Ibn Abbas. A young man whose body became alarmingly thin and slender was brought before Ibn Abbas whilst on the plain of Arafat, so he enquired: What is the matter with him? They responded: He suffers from infatuation. Thereafter, Ibn Abbas would seek refuge in Allāh from being afflicted with infatuation for periods of the day. Such are the hallmarks of someone who would say "Whoever becomes infatuated and remains chaste, suppresses and then dies is a martyr."

This study is further clarified through the narrations wherein the Prophet listed the different martyrs. Amongst them he mentioned the one who is killed on the battlefield in the cause of Allāh, the one who dies due to an ailment of the abdomen, the one who is burnt to death, the mother who dies through child-birth, the one who drowns to death and the one who dies through pleurisy. However, he did not mention the one who dies through infatuation.

Nonetheless, it should suffice the one who has been a fatality to their own infatuation to know that they cannot be included within this narration unless they are patient for the sake of Allāh, remain chaste for the sake of Allāh and suppress anything forbidden for the sake of Allāh. This is not attained unless the person is capable of obtaining whatever it is they are infatuated by, yet they favor the love of Allāh, fear Him and seek His pleasure above all else. Such a people are most befittingly referred to in the statement of Allāh:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِيَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾

"But as for the one who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from unlawful inclination. Then indeed, Paradise will be his abode." [An-Nazi'at:40,41]

And:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٤٦﴾

"But for he who feared the position of his Lord are two gardens." [Ar-Rahman:46]

We beseech Allāh The Mighty, the Lord of the great Throne to make us of those who favor His love over our own desires, seeking through that a nearness to Him and His pleasure.